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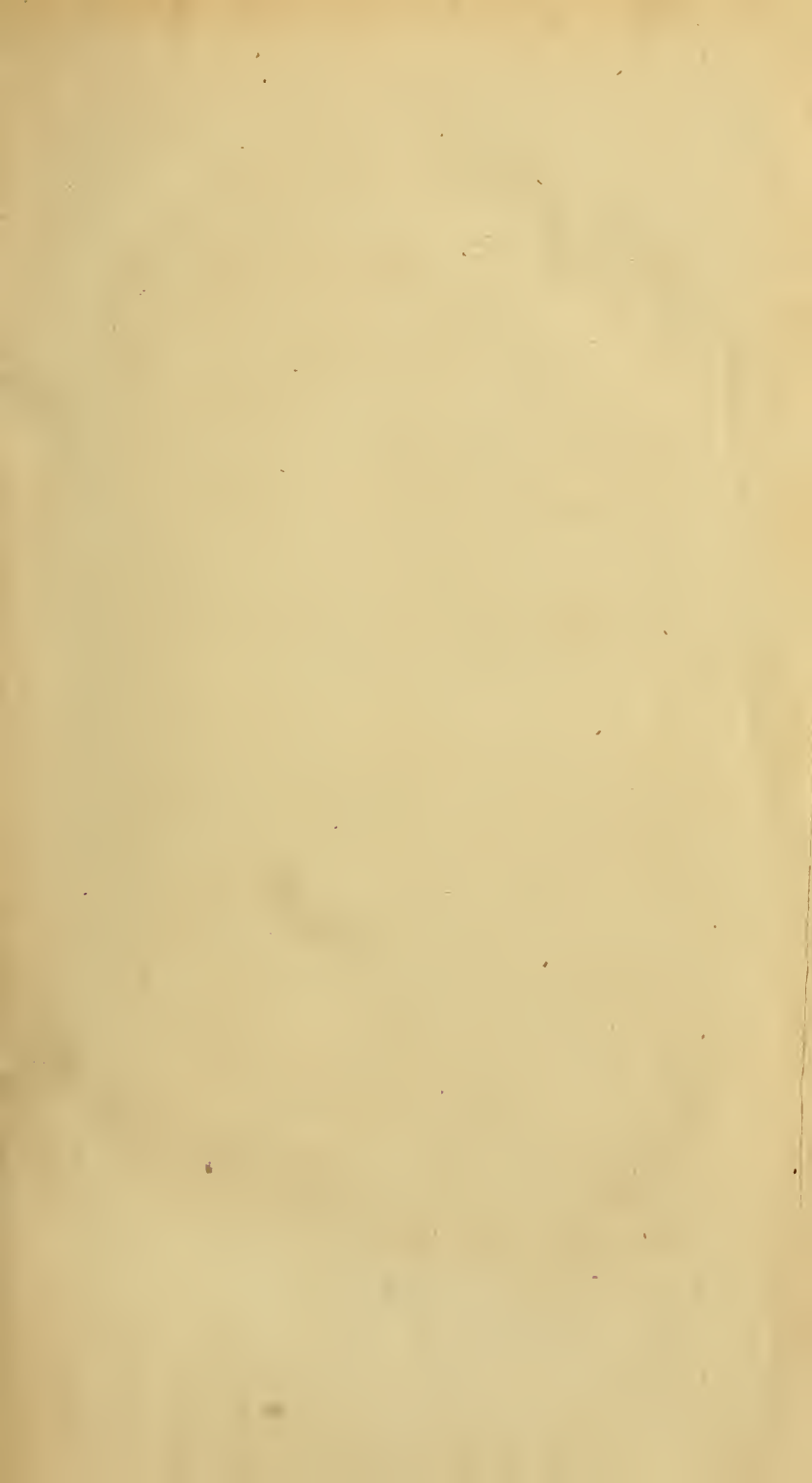


















THE HISTORY OF  
A M E R I C A,

BOOKS IX. AND X.

CONTAINING

THE HISTORY OF VIRGINIA

TO THE YEAR 1688;

AND OF NEW ENGLAND

TO THE YEAR 1652.

By *WILLIAM ROBERTSON*, D. D.

Principal of the University of Edinburgh, Historiographer to His Majesty for Scotland, and Member of the Royal Academy of History at Madrid.

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P H I L A D E L P H I A :

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## ADVERTISEMENT.

**T**HE original plan of my Father, the late Dr. Robertson, with respect to the History of America, comprehended not only an account of the discovery of that country, and of the conquests and colonies of the Spaniards, but embraced also the history of the British and Portuguese

Portuguese establishments in the New World, and of the settlements made by the several nations of Europe in the West India Islands. It was his intention not to have published any part of the Work until the whole was completed. In the Preface to his History of America, he has stated the reasons which induced him to depart from that resolution, and to publish the Two Volumes which contain an account of the discovery of the New World, and of the progress of the Spanish arms and colonies in that quarter of the globe. He says, “ he had made some progress in the History of British America;” and he announces his intention to return to that part of his Work, as soon as the ferment which at that time prevailed in the British Colonies in America, should subside, and regular government be re-established. Various causes con-

curred

curred in preventing him from fulfilling his intention.

During the course of a tedious illness, which he early foresaw would have a fatal termination, Dr. Robertson at different times destroyed many of his papers. But after his death, I found that part of the History of British America which he had wrote many years before, and which is now offered to the Public. It is written with his own hand, as all his Works were; it is as carefully corrected as any part of his Manuscripts which I have ever seen; and he had thought it worthy of being preserved, as it escaped the flames to which so many other papers had been committed. I read it with the utmost attention; but before I came to any resolution about the publication, I put the MS. into the hands of some of those friends whom my Father used to consult on  
such

such occasions, as it would have been rashness and presumption in me to have trusted to my own partial decision. It was perused by some other persons also, in whose taste and judgment I have the greatest confidence; by all of them I was encouraged to offer it to the public, as a fragment curious and interesting in itself, and not inferior to any of my Father's Works.

When I determined to follow that advice, it was a circumstance of great weight with me, that as I never could think myself at liberty to destroy those papers which my Father had thought worthy of being preserved, and as I could not know into whose hands they might hereafter fall, I considered it as certain that they would be published at some future period, when they might meet with an Editor, who, not being actuated by the same sacred regard for the reputation of the Author

thor which I feel, might make alterations and additions, and obtrude the whole on the Public as a genuine and authentic work. The MS. is now published, such as it was left by the Author; nor have I presumed to make any addition, alteration, or correction whatever.

WM. ROBERTSON.

QUEEN-STREET,  
EDINBURGH,  
April 1796.





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THE HISTORY OF  
A M E R I C A,

BOOKS IX. AND X.



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THE HISTORY OF  
A M E R I C A.

BOOK IX.

THE dominions of Great-Britain in America are next in extent to those of Spain. Its acquisitions there are a recompence due to those enterprising talents which prompted the English to enter early on the career of discovery, and to pursue it with persevering ardour. England was the second nation that ventured to visit the New World. The account of Columbus's successful voyage filled all Europe with astonishment and admiration. But in England it did something more; it excited a vehement desire of emulating the glory of Spain, and of aiming to obtain some share in those advantages which were expected in  
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this new field opened to national activity. The attention of the English court had been turned towards the discovery of unknown countries, by its negotiation with Bartholomew Columbus. Henry VII. having listened to his propositions with a more favourable ear than could have been expected from a cautious, distrustful prince, averse by habit as well as by temper to new and hazardous projects, he was more easily induced to approve of a voyage for discovery, proposed by some of his own subjects, soon after the return of Christopher Columbus.

But though the English had spirit to form this scheme, they had not, at that period, attained to such skill in navigation as qualified them for carrying it into execution. From the inconsiderate ambition of its monarchs, the nation had long wasted its genius and activity in pernicious and ineffectual efforts to conquer France. When this ill directed ardour began to abate, the fatal contest between the houses of York and Lancaster, turned the arms of one half of the kingdom against the other, and exhausted the vigour of both. During the course of two centuries, while industry and commerce were making gradual progress, both in the south and north of Europe, the English continued so blind to the advantages of their own situation, that they hardly began to bend their thoughts

thoughts towards those objects and pursuits, to which they are indebted for their present opulence and power. While the trading vessels of Italy, Spain, and Portugal, as well as those of the Hans Towns, visited the most remote ports in Europe, and carried on an active intercourse with its various nations, the English did little more than creep along their own coasts, in small barks, which conveyed the productions of one country to another. Their commerce was almost wholly passive. Their wants were supplied by strangers; and whatever necessary or luxury of life their own country did not yield, was imported in foreign bottoms. The Cross of St. George was seldom displayed beyond the precincts of the narrow seas. Hardly any English ship traded with Spain or Portugal, before the beginning of the fifteenth century; and half a century more elapsed before the English mariners became so adventurous as to enter the Mediterranean.

In this infancy of navigation, Henry could not commit the conduct of an armament, destined to explore unknown regions, to his own subjects. He invested Giovanni Gaboto, a Venetian adventurer, who had settled in Bristol, with the chief command; and issued a commission to him and his three sons, empowering them to sail, under the banner of England, towards the east, north, or west, in order to discover

cover countries unoccupied by any Christian state; to take possession of them in his name, and to carry on an exclusive trade with the inhabitants, under condition of paying a fifth part of the free profit on every voyage to the crown. This commission was granted on March 5th, 1495, in less than two years after the return of Columbus from America\*. But Cabot (for that is the name he assumed in England, and by which he is best known) did not set out on his voyage for two years. He, together with his second son Sebastian, embarked at Bristol, (May 1497) on board a ship furnished by the king, and was accompanied by four small barks, fitted out by merchants of that city.

As in that age the most eminent navigators, formed by the instructions of Columbus, or animated by his example, were guided by ideas derived from his superior knowledge and experience, Cabot had adopted the system of that great man, concerning the probability of opening a new and shorter passage to the East-Indies, by holding a western course. The opinion which Columbus had formed, with respect to the islands which he had discovered, was universally received. They were supposed to lie contiguous to the great continent of India,

\* Hakluyt, iii. 4.



dia, and to constitute a part of the vast countries comprehended under that general name. Cabot, accordingly, deemed it probable, that by steering to the north-west, he might reach India by a shorter course than that which Columbus had taken, and hoped to fall in with the coast of Cathay, or China, of whose fertility and opulence the descriptions of Marco Polo had excited high ideas. After sailing for some weeks due west, and nearly on the parallel of the port from which he took his departure, he discovered a large island, which he called *Prima Vista*, and his sailors, *Newfoundland*; and in a few days he descried a smaller isle, to which he gave the name of St. John. (June 24.) He landed on both these, made some observations on their soil and productions, and brought off three of the natives. Continuing his course westward, he soon reached the continent of North America, and sailed along it from the fifty-sixth to the thirty-eighth degree of latitude, from the coast of Labrador to that of Virginia. As his chief object was to discover some inlet that might open a passage to the west, it does not appear that he landed any where during this extensive run; and he returned to England, without attempting either settlement or conquest in any part of that continent.†

If

† Monson's Naval Tracts, in Churchill's Collect. iii. 211.

If it had been Henry's purpose to prosecute the object of the commission given by him to Cabot, and to take possession of the countries which he had discovered, the success of this voyage must have answered his most sanguine expectations. His subjects were, undoubtedly, the first Europeans who had visited that part of the American continent, and were entitled to whatever right of property prior discovery is supposed to confer. Countries which stretched in an uninterrupted course through such a large portion of the temperate zone, opened a prospect of settling to advantage under mild climates, and in a fertile soil. But by the time that Cabot returned to England, he found both the state of affairs and the king's inclination unfavourable to any scheme, the execution of which would have required tranquillity and leisure. Henry was involved in a war with Scotland, and his kingdom was not yet fully composed, after the commotion excited by a formidable insurrection of his own subjects in the west. An ambassador from Ferdinand of Arragon was then in London; and as Henry set a high value upon the friendship of that monarch, for whose character he professed much admiration, perhaps from its similarity to his own, and was endeavouring to strengthen their union, by negotiating the marriage which afterwards took place between his eldest son and the princess Catharine, he  
was



was cautious of giving any offence to a prince, jealous to excess of all his rights. From the position of the islands and continent which Cabot had discovered, it was evident that they lay within the limits of the ample donative which the bounty of Alexander VI. had conferred upon Ferdinand and Isabella. No person, in that age, questioned the validity of a Papal grant; and Ferdinand was not of a temper to relinquish any claim to which he had a shadow of title. Submission to the authority of the Pope, and deference for an ally whom he courted, seem to have concurred with Henry's own situation, in determining him to abandon a scheme, in which he had engaged with some degree of ardour and expectation. No attempt towards discovery was made in England during the remainder of his reign; and Sebastian Cabot, finding no encouragement for his active talents there, entered into the service of Spain\*.

This is the most probable account of the sudden cessation of Henry's activity, after such success

\* Some schemes of discovery seem to have been formed in England towards the beginning of the sixteenth century. But as there is no other memorial of them, than what remains in a patent granted by the king to the adventurers, it is probable that they were feeble or abortive projects. If any attempt had been made in consequence of this patent, it would not have escaped the knowledge of a compiler so industrious and inquisitive as Hakluyt. In his patent, Henry restricts the adventurers from encroaching on the countries discovered by the kings of Portugal, or any other prince in confederacy with England. Rymer's *Fœdera*, vol. xiii. p. 37.

success in his first essay as might have encouraged him to persevere. The advantages of commerce, as well as its nature, were so little understood in England about this period, that by an act of parliament in the year 1488, the taking of interest for the use of money was prohibited under severe penalties.|| And by another law, the profit arising from dealing in bills of exchange was condemned as favouring of usury.† It is not surprising, then, that no great effort should be made to extend trade, by a nation whose commercial ideas were still so crude and illiberal. But it is more difficult to discover what prevented this scheme of Henry VII. from being resumed during the reigns of his son and grandson; and to give any reason why no attempt was made, either to explore the northern continent of America more fully, or to settle in it. Henry VIII. was frequently at open enmity with Spain; the value of the Spanish acquisitions in America had become so well known, as might have excited his desire to obtain some footing in those opulent regions; and during a considerable part of his reign, the prohibitions in a papal bull would not have restrained him from making encroachment upon the Spanish dominions. But the reign of Henry was not favourable to the progress of discovery. During

|| 3 Hen. VII. c. 5.

† 3 Hen. VII. c. 6.

ring one period of it, the active part which he took in the affairs of the continent, and the vigour with which he engaged in the contest between the two mighty rivals, Charles V. and Francis I. gave full occupation to the enterprising spirit both of the king and of his nobility. During another period of his administration, his famous controversy with the court of Rome kept the nation in perpetual agitation and suspense. Engrossed by those objects, neither the king nor the nobles had inclination or leisure to turn their attention to new pursuits; and without their patronage and aid, the commercial part of the nation was too inconsiderable to make any effort of consequence. Though England, by its total separation from the church of Rome, soon after the accession of Edward VI. disclaimed that authority, which, by its presumptuous partition of the globe between two favourite nations, circumscribed the activity of every other state within very narrow limits, yet a feeble minority, distracted with faction, was not a juncture for forming schemes of doubtful success and remote utility. The bigotry of Mary, and her marriage with Philip, disposed her to pay a sacred regard to that grant of the Holy See, which vested in a husband, on whom she doated, an exclusive right to every part of the New World. Thus, through a singular succession of various causes, sixty-one years elapsed

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from

from the time that the English discovered North America, during which their monarchs gave little attention to that country which was destined to be annexed to their crown, and to be a chief source of its opulence and power.

But though the public contributed little towards the progress of discovery, naval skill, knowledge of commerce, and a spirit of enterprize, began to spread among the English. During the reign of Henry VIII. several new channels of trade were opened, and private adventurers visited remote countries with which England had formerly no intercourse. Some merchants of Bristol having fitted out two ships for the southern regions of America, committed the conduct of them to Sebastian Cabot, who had quitted the service of Spain. He visited (1516) the coasts of Brasil, and touched at the islands of Hispaniola and Puerto Rico; and though this voyage seems not to have been beneficial to the adventurers, it extended the sphere of English navigation, and added to the national stock of nautical science.\* Though disappointed in their expectations of profit in this first essay, the merchants were not discouraged. They sent, successively, several vessels from different ports towards the same

\* Hakluyt, iii. 498.

same quarter, and seem to have carried on an interloping trade in the Portuguese settlements with success.† Nor was it only towards the west, that the activity of the English was directed. Other merchants began to extend their commercial views to the east; and by establishing an intercourse with several islands in the Archipelago, and with some of the towns on the coast of Syria, they found a new market for woollen cloths, (the only manufacture which the nation had begun to cultivate,) and supplied their countrymen with various productions of the east, formerly unknown, or received from the Venetians at an exorbitant price.\*

But the discovery of a shorter passage to the East Indies, by the north-west, was still the favourite project of the nation, which beheld, with envy, the vast wealth that flowed into Portugal, from its commerce with those regions. The scheme was accordingly twice resumed (1527 and 1536) under the long administration of Henry VIII. first with some slender aid from the king, and then by private merchants. Both voyages were disastrous and unsuccessful. In the former one of the ships was lost. In the latter, the stock of provisions was so ill proportioned to the number of the crew, that

† Hakluyt, iii. 700.

\* Ibid. ii. 96, &c.



that although they were but six months at sea, many perished with hunger, and the survivors were constrained to support life by feeding on the bodies of their dead companions.\*

The vigour of the commercial spirit did not relax in the reign of Edward VI. The great fishery on the banks of Newfoundland became an object of attention; and from some regulations for the encouragement of that branch of trade, it seems to have been prosecuted with activity and success.† But the prospect of opening a communication with China and the Spice Islands, by some other route than round the Cape of Good Hope, still continued to allure the English, more than any scheme of adventure. Cabot, whose opinion was deservedly of high authority in whatever related to naval enterprize, warmly urged the English to make another attempt to discover this passage. As it had been thrice searched for in vain, by steering towards the north-west, he proposed that a trial should now be made by the north-east; and supported this advice by such plausible reasons and conjectures, as excited sanguine expectations of success. Several noblemen and persons of rank, together with some principal merchants, having associated for this purpose were incorporated,

\* Hakluyt, i, 213, &c. iii. 129. 130.    † Ibid. iii. 131.

rated, by a charter from the king, under the title of The Company of Merchant Adventurers for the Discovery of Regions, Dominions, Islands, and Places unknown. Cabot, who was appointed governor of this company, (1553) soon fitted out two ships and a bark, furnished with instructions in his own hand, which discover the great extent both of his naval skill and mercantile sagacity.

Sir Hugh Willoughby, who was entrusted with the command, stood directly (May 10) northwards along the coast of Norway, and doubled the North Cape. But in that tempestuous ocean, his small squadron was separated in a violent storm. Willoughby's ship and the bark took refuge in an obscure harbour in a desert part of Russian Lapland, where he and all his companions were frozen to death. Richard Chancelour, the captain of the other vessel was more fortunate; he entered the White Sea, and wintered in safety at Archangel. Though no vessel of any foreign nation had ever visited that quarter of the globe before, the inhabitants received their new visitors with an hospitality which would have done honour to a more polished people. The English learned there, that this was a province of a vast empire, subject to the Great Duke or Czar of Muscovy, who resided in a great city twelve hundred miles from Archangel. Chancelour,

celour, with a spirit becoming an officer employed in an expedition for discovery, did not hesitate a moment about the part which he ought to take, and set out for that distant capital. On his arrival in Moscow, he was admitted to audience, and delivered a letter which the captain of each ship had received from Edward VI. for the sovereign of whatever country they should discover, to John Vasilowitz, who at that time filled the Russian throne. John, though he ruled over his subjects with the cruelty and caprice of a barbarous despot, was not destitute of political sagacity. He instantly perceived the happy consequences that might flow from opening an intercourse between his dominions and the western nations of Europe; and, delighted with the fortunate event to which he was indebted for this unexpected benefit, he treated Chancelour with great respect; and, by a letter to the king of England, (Feb. 1554) invited his subjects to trade in the Russian dominions, with ample promises of protection and favour.\*

Chancelour, on his return, found Mary seated on the English throne. The success of this voyage, the discovery of a new course of navigation, the establishment of commerce with a vast empire, the name of which was then hardly known in the west, and the hope  
of

\* Hakluyt, i. 226, &c.



of arriving, in this direction, at those regions which had been so long the object of desire, excited a wonderful ardour to prosecute the design with greater vigour. Mary, implicitly guided by her husband in every act of administration, was not unwilling to turn the commercial activity of her subjects towards a quarter, where it could not excite the jealousy of Spain, by encroaching on its possessions in the New World. She wrote to John Vasilowitz in the most respectful terms, courting his friendship. She confirmed the charter of Edward VI. empowered Chancelour, and two agents appointed by the Company, to negotiate with the Czar in her name; and according to the spirit of that age, she granted an exclusive right of trade with Russia to the Corporation of Merchant Adventurers.\* In virtue of this, they not only established an active and gainful commerce with Russia, but, in hopes of reaching China, they pushed their discoveries eastwards to the coast of Nova Zembla, the straits of Waigatz, and towards the mouth of the great river Oby. But in those frozen seas, which Nature seems not to have destined for navigation, they were exposed to innumerable disasters and met with successive disappointments.

Nor were their attempts to open a communication with India made only in this channel.

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\* Hakluyt. i, 258. &c,

They appointed some of their factors to accompany the Russian caravans, which travelled into Persia by the way of Astracan and the Caspian Sea, instructing them to penetrate as far as possible towards the east, and to endeavour, not only to establish a trade with those countries, but to acquire every information that might afford any light towards the discovery of a passage to China by the north-east.\* Notwithstanding a variety of dangers to which they were exposed in travelling through so many provinces, inhabited by fierce and licentious nations, some of these factors reached Bokara, in the province of Chorasán; and though prevented from advancing farther by the civil wars which desolated the country, they returned to Europe with some hopes of extending the commerce of the Company into Persia, and with much intelligence concerning the state of those remote regions of the east.†

The successful progress of the Merchant Adventurers in discovery, roused the emulation of their countrymen, and turned their activity into new channels. A commercial intercourse, hitherto unattempted by the English, having been opened with the coast of Barbary, the specimens which that afforded of the valuable productions of Africa, invited some enterprising

\* Hakluyt. i. 301.

† Ibid. i. 310, &c.

terprising navigators to visit the more remote provinces of that quarter of the globe. They sailed along its western shore, traded in different ports on both sides of the Line, and after acquiring considerable knowledge of those countries, returned with a cargo of goldduft, ivory, and other rich commodities, little known at that time in England. This commerce with Africa seems to have been pursued with vigour, and was at that time no less innocent than lucrative; for as the English had then no demand for slaves, they carried it on for many years, without violating the rights of humanity. Thus far did the English advance during a period which may be considered as the infant state of their navigation and commerce; and feeble as its steps at that time may appear to us, we trace them with an interesting curiosity, and look back with satisfaction to the early essays of that spirit, which we now behold in the full maturity of its strength. Even in those first efforts of the English, an intelligent observer will discern presages of their future improvement. As soon as the activity of the nation was put in motion, it took various directions, and exerted itself in each with that steady, persevering industry, which is the soul and guide of commerce. Neither discouraged by the hardships and dangers to which they were exposed in those northern seas which they first attempted to explore, nor afraid of

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venturing into the sultry climates of the torrid zone, the English, during the reigns of Henry VIII. Edward VI. and Mary, opened some of the most considerable sources of their commercial opulence, and gave a beginning to their trade with Turkey, with Africa, with Russia, and with Newfoundland.

By the Progress which England had already made in navigation and commerce, it was now prepared for advancing further; and on the accession of Elizabeth to the throne, a period commenced, extremely auspicious to this spirit which was rising in the nation. The domestic tranquillity of the kingdom, maintained, almost without interruption, during the course of a long and prosperous reign; the peace with foreign nations, that subsisted more than twenty years after Elizabeth was seated on the throne; the Queen's attentive economy, which exempted her subjects from the burden of taxes oppressive to trade; the popularity of her administration; were all favourable to commercial enterprise, and called it forth into vigorous exertion. The discerning eye of Elizabeth having early perceived that the security of a kingdom environed by the sea, depended on its naval force, she began her government with adding to the number and strength of the royal navy; which, during a factious minority, and a reign intent on no object but that of  
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suppreſſing hereſy, had been neglected, and ſuffered to decay. She filled her arsenals with naval ſtores; ſhe built ſeveral ſhips of great force, according to the ideas of that age, and encouraged her ſubjects to imitate her example, that they might no longer depend on foreigners from whom the Engliſh had hitherto purchaſed all veſſels of any conſiderable burden.\* By thoſe efforts, the ſkill of the Engliſh artificers was improved, the number of ſailors increaſed, and the attention of the public turned to the navy, as the moſt important national object. Inſtead of abandoning any of the new channels of commerce which had been opened in the three preceding reigns, the Engliſh frequented them with greater aſſiduity, and the patronage of their ſovereign added vigour to all their efforts. In order to ſecure to them the continuance of their excluſive trade with Ruſſia, Elizabeth cultivated the connection with John Vaſilowitz, which had been formed by her predeceſſor, and, by ſucceſſive embaſſies, gained his confidence ſo thoroughly, that the Engliſh enjoyed that lucrative privilege during his long reign. She encouraged the Company of Merchant Adventurers, whoſe monopoly of the Ruſſian trade was confirmed by act of parliament,† to reſume their deſign of penetrating into Perſia by land. Their ſecond attempt, (1562,) conducted

\* Camd. Annales. p. 70. edit. 1615; fol. † Hakluyt, i. 369.

ducted with greater prudence, or undertaken at a more favourable juncture than the first, was more successful. Their agents arrived in the Persian Court, and obtained such protection and immunities from the Shah, that for a course of years they carried on a gainful commerce in his kingdom;\* and by frequenting the various provinces of Persia, became so well acquainted with the vast riches of the east, as strengthened their design of opening a more direct intercourse with those fertile regions by sea.

But as every effort to accomplish this by the north-east had proved abortive, a scheme was formed, under the patronage of the Earl of Warwick, the head of the enterprising family of Dudley, to make a new attempt, by holding an opposite course by the north-west. The conduct of this enterprise was committed to Martin Frobisher, an officer of experience and reputation. In three successive voyages (1576, 1577, and 1578) he explored the inhospitable coast of Labrador, and that of Greenland, (to which Elizabeth gave the name of *Meta Incognita*,) without discovering any probable appearance of that passage to India for which he sought. This new disappointment was sensibly felt, and might have damped the spirit of naval

\* Ibid. i. 344, &c.

naval enterprize among the English, if it had not resumed fresh vigour, amidst the general exultation of the nation, upon the successful expedition of Francis Drake. That bold navigator, emulous of the glory which Magellan had acquired by sailing round the globe, formed a scheme of attempting a voyage, which all Europe had admired for sixty years, without venturing to follow the Portuguese discoverer in his adventurous course. Drake undertook this with a feeble squadron, in which the largest vessel did not exceed a hundred tons, and he accomplished it, with no less credit to himself, than honour to his country. Even in this voyage, conducted with other views, Drake seems not to have been inattentive to the favourite object of his countrymen, the discovery of a new route to India. Before he quitted the Pacific Ocean, in order to stretch towards the Philippine islands, he ranged along the coast of California, as high as the latitude of forty-two degrees north, in hopes of discovering, on that side, the communication between the two seas, which had so often been searched for in vain on the other. But this was the only unsuccessful attempt of Drake. The excessive cold of the climate, intolerable to men who had long been accustomed to tropical heat, obliged him to stop short in his progress towards the north; and whether or not there be any passage from the Pacific to the

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the Atlantic Ocean in that quarter, is a point still unascertained.\*

From this period, the English seem to have confided in their own abilities and courage, as equal to any naval enterprize. They had now visited every region to which navigation extended in that age, and had rivalled the nation of highest repute for naval skill in its most splendid exploit. But notwithstanding the knowledge which they had acquired of the different quarters of the globe, they had not hitherto attempted any settlement out of their own country. Their merchants had not yet acquired such a degree, either of wealth or of political influence; as were requisite towards carrying a scheme of colonization into execution. Persons of noble birth were destitute of the ideas and information which might have disposed them to patronize such a design. The growing power of Spain, however, and the ascendant over the other nations of Europe to which it had attained under Charles V. and his son, naturally turned the attention of mankind towards the importance of those settlements in the New World; to which they were so much indebted for that pre-eminence. The intercourse between Spain and England, during the reign of Philip and Mary; the re-  
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\* Hakluyt, iii. 440.

Camd. Annal. 301, &c.



fort of the Spanish nobility to the English court, while Philip resided there; the study of the Spanish language, which became fashionable; and the translation of several histories of America into English, diffused gradually through the nation a more distinct knowledge of the policy of Spain in planting its colonies, and of the advantages which it derived from them. When hostilities commenced between Elizabeth and Philip, the prospect of annoying Spain by sea opened a new career to the enterprising spirit of the English nobility. Almost every eminent leader of the age aimed at distinguishing himself by naval exploits. That service, and the ideas connected with it, the discovery of unknown countries, the establishment of distant colonies, and the enriching of commerce by new commodities, became familiar to persons of rank.

In consequence of all those concurring causes, the English began seriously to form plans of settling colonies in those parts of America, which hitherto they had only visited. The projectors and patrons of these plans were mostly persons of rank and influence. Among them, Sir Humphry Gilbert of Compton in Devonshire, ought to be mentioned with the distinction due to the conductor of the first English colony to America. He had early rendered himself conspicuous by his military services

services both in France and Ireland; and having afterwards turned his attention to naval affairs, he published a discourse concerning the probability of a north-west passage, which discovered no inconsiderable portion both of learning and ingenuity, mingled with the enthusiasm, the credulity, and sanguine expectations which incite men to new and hazardous undertakings.\* With those talents, he was deemed a proper person to be employed in establishing a new colony, and easily obtained from the Queen (June 11. 1578) letters patent, vesting in him sufficient powers for this purpose.

As this is the first charter to a colony, granted by the Crown of England, the articles in it merit particular attention, as they unfold the ideas of that age, with respect to the nature of such settlements. Elizabeth authorizes him to discover and take possession of all remote and barbarous lands, unoccupied by any Christian prince or people. She vests in him, his heirs and assigns, for ever, the full right of property in the soil of those countries whereof he shall take possession. She permits such of her subjects, as were willing to accompany Gilbert in his voyage, to go and settle in the countries which he shall plant. She

\* Hakluyt, iii. 11.

She empowers him, his heirs and assigns, to dispose of whatever portion of those lands he shall judge meet to persons settled there, in fee-simple, according to the laws of England. She ordains, that all the lands granted to Gilbert shall hold of the Crown of England by homage, on payment of the fifth part of the gold or silver ore found there. She confers upon him, his heirs and assigns, the complete jurisdictions and royalties, as well marine as other, within the said lands and seas thereunto adjoining; and as their common safety and interest would render good government necessary in their new settlements, she gave Gilbert, his heirs and assigns, full power to convict, punish, pardon, govern, and rule, by their good discretion and policy, as well in causes capital or criminal as civil, both marine and other, all persons who shall from time to time settle within the said countries, according to such statutes, laws, and ordinances as shall be by him, his heirs and assigns, devised and established for their better government. She declared, that all who settled there should have and enjoy all the privileges of free denizens and natives of England, any law, custom, or usage to the contrary notwithstanding. And finally, she prohibited all persons from attempting to settle within two hundred leagues of any place which Sir Humphrey Gilbert,

or his associates, shall have occupied, during the space of six years.\*

With those extraordinary powers, suited to the high notions of authority and prerogative prevalent in England during the sixteenth century, but very repugnant to more recent ideas with respect to the rights of free men, who voluntarily unite to form a colony, Gilbert began to collect associates, and to prepare for embarkation. His own character, and the zealous efforts of his half-brother, Walter Raleigh, who, even in his early youth, displayed those splendid talents, and that undaunted spirit, which create admiration and confidence, soon procured him a sufficient number of followers. But his success was not suited either to the sanguine hopes of his countrymen, or to the expence of his preparations. Two expeditions, both of which he conducted in person, ended disastrously. In the last, (1580) he himself perished, without having effected his intended settlement on the continent of America, or performing any thing more worthy of notice, than the empty formality of taking possession of the island of Newfoundland, in the name of his sovereign. The dissensions among his officers; the licentious and ungovernable spirit of some of his crew;

\* Hakluyt, iii. 135.

crew; his total ignorance of the countries which he purposed to occupy; his misfortune in approaching the continent too far towards the north, where the inhospitable coast of Cape Breton did not invite them to settle; the shipwreck of his largest vessel; and above all, the scanty provision which the funds of a private man could make of what was requisite for establishing a new colony, were the true causes to which the failure of the enterprise must be imputed, not to any deficiency of abilities or resolution in its leader\*.

But the miscarriage of a scheme, in which Gilbert had wasted his fortune, did not discourage Raleigh. He adopted all his brother's ideas; and applying to the Queen, in whose favour he stood high at that time, he procured a patent, (1584, March 26) with jurisdiction and prerogatives as ample as had been granted unto Gilbert.† Raleigh, no less eager to execute than to undertake the scheme, instantly dispatched (April 27) two small vessels, under the command of Amadas and Barlow, two officers of trust, to visit the countries which he intended to settle, and to acquire some previous knowledge of their coasts, their soil, and productions. In order to avoid Gilbert's error, in holding too far north, they  
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\* Hakluyt, iii. 143, &c.

† Hakluyt, iii. 243.



took their course by the Canaries and the West India islands, and approached the North American continent by the Gulph of Florida. Unfortunately their chief researches were made in that part of the country now known by the name of North Carolina, the province in America most destitute of commodious harbours. They touched first at an island, which they call Wokocon (probably Ocakoke,) situated on the inlet into Pamplicoe Sound, and then at Raonoke, near the mouth of Albemarle Sound. In both, they had some intercourse with the natives, whom they found to be savages, with all the characteristic qualities of uncivilized life, bravery, aversion to labour, hospitality, a propensity to admire, and a willingness to exchange their rude productions for English commodities, especially for iron, or any of the useful metals of which they were destitute. After spending a few weeks in this traffic, and in visiting some parts of the adjacent continent, Amadas and Barlow returned to England, (Sept. 15) with two of the natives, and gave such splendid descriptions of the beauty of the country, the fertility of the soil, and the mildness of the climate, that Elizabeth, delighted with the idea of occupying a territory, superior, so far, to the barren regions towards the north hitherto visited by her subjects, bestowed on it the name of Virginia;

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as a memorial that this happy discovery had been made under a virgin Queen.\*

Their report encouraged Raleigh to hasten his preparations for taking possession of such an inviting property. He fitted out a squadron of seven small ships, under the command of Sir Richard Greenville, a man of honourable birth, and of courage so undaunted as to be conspicuous even in that gallant age. But the spirit of that predatory war which the English carried on against Spain, mingled with this scheme of settlement; and on this account, as well as from unacquaintance with a more direct and shorter course to North America, Greenville sailed by the West India islands. He spent some time in cruising among these, and in taking prizes; so that it was towards the close of June before he arrived on the coast of North America. He touched at both the islands where Amadas and Barlow had landed, and made some excursions into different parts of the continent round Pamplicoe and Albemarle Sounds. But as, unfortunately, he did not advance far enough towards the north, to discover the noble Bay of Chesapeak, he established the colony (August 25) which he left on the island of Raonoke, an incommodious station, without any safe harbour, and almost uninhabited.†

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\* Hakluyt, iii. 246.

† Hakluyt, iii. 251.

This colony consisted only of one hundred and eighty persons, under the command of Captain Lane, assisted by some men of note, the most distinguished of whom was Hariot, an eminent mathematician. Their chief employment, during a residence of nine months, was to obtain a more extensive knowledge of the country; and their researches were carried on with greater spirit, and reached farther than could have been expected from a colony so feeble, and in a station so disadvantageous. But from the same impatience of indigent adventurers to acquire sudden wealth, which gave a wrong direction to the industry of the Spaniards in their settlements, the greater part of the English seem to have considered nothing as worthy of attention but mines of gold and silver. These they sought for, wherever they came; these they enquired after with unwearied eagerness. The savages soon discovered the favourite objects which allured them, and artfully amused them with so many tales concerning pearl fisheries, and rich mines of various metals, that Lane and his companions wasted their time and activity in the chimerical pursuit of these, instead of labouring to raise provisions for their own subsistence. On discovering the deceit of the Indians, they were so much exasperated, that from expostulations and reproaches, they proceeded to open hostility (1586). The supplies of provisions  
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which they had been accustomed to receive from the natives were of course withdrawn. Through their own negligence, no other precaution had been taken for their support. Raleigh, having engaged in a scheme too expensive for his narrow funds, had not been able to send them that recruit of stores with which Greenville had promised to furnish them early in the spring. The colony, reduced to the utmost distress, and on the point of perishing with famine, was preparing to disperse into different districts of the country in quest of food, (June 1) when Sir Francis Drake appeared with his fleet, returning from a successful expedition against the Spaniards in the West Indies. A scheme which he formed, of furnishing Lane and his associates with such supplies as might enable them to remain with comfort in their station, was disappointed by a sudden storm, in which a small vessel that he destined for their service was dashed to pieces; and as he could not supply them with another, at their joint request, as they were worn out with fatigue and famine, he carried them home to England (June 19.)\*

Such was the inauspicious beginning of the English settlements in the New World; and after exciting high expectations, this first attempt

\* Hakluyt, iii. 255. Camd. Annal. 387.

tempt produced no effect but that of affording a more complete knowledge of the country; as it enabled Hariot, a man of science and observation, to describe its soil, climate, productions, and the manners of its inhabitants, with a degree of accuracy which merits no inconsiderable praise, when compared with the childish and marvellous tales published by several of the early visitants of the New World. There is another consequence of this abortive colony important enough to entitle it to a place in history. Lane and his associates, by their constant intercourse with the Indians, had acquired a relish for their favourite enjoyment of smoking tobacco; to the use of which, the credulity of that people not only ascribed a thousand imaginary virtues, but their superstition considered the plant itself as a gracious gift of the gods, for the solace of human kind, and the most acceptable offering which man can present to heaven.\* They brought with them a specimen of this new commodity to England, and taught their countrymen the method of using it; which Raleigh, and some young men of fashion, fondly adopted. From imitation of them, from love of novelty, and from the favourable opinion of its salutary qualities entertained by several physicians, the practice spread among

\* Hariot ap. Hakluyt, iii. 271. De Bry, *America*, Pars i.

mong the English. The Spaniards and Portuguese had, previous to this, introduced it in other parts of Europe. This habit of taking tobacco gradually extended from the extremities of the north to those of the south, and in one form or other seems to be equally grateful to the inhabitants of every climate; and by a singular caprice of the human species, no less inexplicable than unexampled, (so bewitching is the acquired taste for a weed of no manifest utility, and at first not only unpleasant, but nauseous,) that it has become almost as universal as the demands of those appetites originally implanted in our nature. Smoking was the first mode of taking tobacco in England; and we learn from the comic writers towards the close of the sixteenth century and the beginning of the seventeenth, that this was deemed one of the accomplishments of a man of fashion and spirit.

A few days after Drake departed from Roanoke, a small bark, dispatched by Raleigh with a supply of stores for the colony, landed at the place where the English had settled; but on finding it deserted by their countrymen, they returned to England. The bark was hardly gone, when Sir Richard Greenville appeared with three ships. After searching in vain for the colony which he had planted, without being able to learn what had befallen

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it, he left fifteen of his crew to keep possession of the island. This handful of men was soon overpowered and cut in pieces by the savages.\*

Though all Raleigh's efforts to establish a colony in Virginia had hitherto proved abortive, and had been defeated by a succession of disasters and disappointments, neither his hopes nor resources were exhausted. Early in the following year, (1587) he fitted out three ships, under the command of Captain John White, who carried thither a colony more numerous than that which had been settled under Lane. On their arrival in Virginia, after viewing the face of the country covered with one continued forest, which to them appeared an uninhabited wild, as it was occupied only by a few scattered tribes of savages, they discovered that they were destitute of many things which they deemed essentially necessary towards their subsistence in such an uncomfortable situation; and, with one voice, requested White, their commander, to return to England, as the person among them most likely to solicit, with efficacy, the supply on which depended the existence of the colony. White landed in his native country at a most unfavourable season for the negotiation which he had undertaken. He found the nation in  
universal

\* Hakluyt, iii. 265. 283.



universal alarm at the formidable preparations of Philip II. to invade England, and collecting all its force to oppose the fleet to which he had arrogantly given the name of the Invincible Armada. Raleigh, Greenville, and all the most zealous patrons of the new settlement, were called to act a distinguished part in the operations of a year (1588) equally interesting and glorious to England. Amidst danger so imminent, and during a contest for the honour of their sovereign and the independence of their country, it was impossible to attend to a less important and remote object. The unfortunate colony in Roanoke received no supply, and perished miserably by famine, or by the unrelenting cruelty of those barbarians by whom they were surrounded.

During the remainder of Elizabeth's reign, the scheme of establishing a colony in Virginia was not resumed. Raleigh, with a most aspiring mind and extraordinary talents, enlightened by knowledge no less uncommon, had the spirit and the defects of a projector. Allured by new objects, and always giving the preference to such as were most splendid and arduous, he was apt to engage in undertakings so vast and so various, as to be far beyond his power of accomplishing. He was now intent on peopling and improving a large district of country in Ireland, of which he had obtained

a grant from the Queen. He was a deep adventurer in the scheme of fitting out a powerful armament against Spain, in order to establish Don Antonio on the throne of Portugal. He had begun to form his favourite, but visionary plan, of penetrating into the province of Guiana, where he fondly dreamed of taking possession of inexhaustible wealth, flowing from the richest mines in the New World. Amidst this multiplicity of projects, of such promising appearance, and recommended by novelty, he naturally became cold towards his ancient and hitherto unprofitable scheme of settling a colony in Virginia, and was easily induced to assign his right of property in that country, which he had never visited, together with all the privileges contained in his patent, to Sir Thomas Smith, and a company of merchants in London (March, 1596.) This company, satisfied with a paltry traffic carried on by a few small barks, made no attempt to take possession of the country. Thus, after a period of a hundred and six years from the time that Cabot discovered North America, in the name of Henry VII. and of twenty years from the time that Raleigh planted the first colony, there was not a single Englishman settled there at the demise of Queen Elizabeth, in the year one thousand six hundred and three.

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I have already explained the causes of this, during the period previous to the accession of Elizabeth. Other causes produced the same effect under her administration. Though for one half of her reign England was engaged in no foreign war, and commerce enjoyed that perfect security which is friendly to its progress; though the glory of her latter years gave the highest tone of elevation and vigour to the national spirit; the Queen herself, from her extreme parsimony, and her aversion to demand extraordinary supplies of her subjects, was more apt to restrain than to second the ardent genius of her people. Several of the most splendid enterprizes in her reign were concerted and executed by private adventurers. All the schemes for colonization were carried on by the funds of individuals, without any public aid. Even the felicity of her government was adverse to the establishment of remote colonies. So powerful is the attraction of our native soil, and such our fortunate partiality to the laws and manners of our own country, that men seldom choose to abandon it, unless they be driven away by oppression, or allured by vast prospects of sudden wealth. But the provinces of America in which the English attempted to settle, did not, like those occupied by Spain, invite them thither by any appearance of silver or golden mines. All their hopes of gain were distant; and they saw that

that nothing could be earned but by persevering exertions of industry. The maxims of Elizabeth's administration were, in their general tenor, so popular, as did not force her subjects to emigrate, in order to escape from the heavy or vexatious hand of power. It seems to have been with difficulty that these slender bands of planters were collected, on which the writers of that age bestow the name of the first and second Virginian colonies. The fulness of time for English colonization was not yet arrived.

But the succession of the Scottish line to the crown of England hastened its approach. James was hardly seated on the throne before he discovered his pacific intentions, and he soon terminated the long war which had been carried on between Spain and England, by an amicable treaty. From that period, uninterrupted tranquillity continued during his reign. Many persons of high rank, and of ardent ambition, to whom the war with Spain had afforded constant employment, and presented alluring prospects, not only of fame but of wealth, soon became so impatient of languishing at home without occupation or object, that their invention was on the stretch to find some exercise for their activity and talents. To both these, North America seemed to open a new field, and schemes of carrying colonies thither

thither became more general and more popular.

A voyage, undertaken by Bartholemew Gosnold in the last year of the Queen, facilitated, as well as encouraged, the execution of these schemes. He sailed from Falmouth in a small bark, with thirty two men. Instead of following former navigators in their unnecessary circuit by the West India isles and the Gulf of Florida, Gosnold steered due west, as nearly as the winds would permit, and was the first English commander who reached America by this shorter and more direct course. That part of the continent which he first descried was a promontory in the province now called Massachusetts Bay, to which he gave the name of Cape Cod. Holding along the coast, as it stretched towards the south-west, he touched at two islands, one of which he called Martha's Vineyard, the other Elizabeth's Island; and visited the adjoining continent, and traded with its inhabitants. He and his companions were so much delighted every where with the inviting aspect of the country, that notwithstanding the smallness of their number, a part of them consented to remain there. But when they had leisure to reflect upon the fate of former settlers in America, they retracted a resolution formed in the first warmth of their admiration; and Gosnold returned to  
England

England in less than four months from the time of his departure.\*

This voyage, however inconsiderable it may appear, had important effects. The English now discovered the aspect of the American continent to be extremely inviting far to the north of the place where they had formerly attempted to settle. The coast of a vast country, stretching through the most desirable climates, lay before them. The richness of its virgin soil promised a certain recompence to their industry. In its interior provinces unexpected sources of wealth might open, and unknown objects of commerce might be found. Its distance from England was diminished almost a third part, by the new course which Gosnold had pointed out. Plans for establishing colonies began to be formed in different parts of the kingdom; and before these were ripe for execution, one small vessel was sent out by the merchants of Bristol, another by the Earl of Southampton and Lord Arundel of Wardour, in order to learn whether Gosnold's account of the country was to be considered as a just representation of its state, or as the exaggerated description of a fond discoverer. Both returned with a full confirmation of his veracity, and with the addition  
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\* Purchas, iv. p. 1647.

of so many new circumstances in favour of the country, acquired by a more extensive view of it, as greatly increased the desire of planting it.

The most active and efficacious promoter of this was Richard Hakluyt, prebendary of Westminster, to whom England is more indebted for its American possessions than to any man of that age. Formed under a kinsman of the same name, eminent for naval and commercial knowledge, he imbibed a similar taste, and applied early to the study of geography and navigation. These favourite sciences engrossed his attention, and to diffuse a relish for them was the great object of his life. In order to excite his countrymen to naval enterprize, by flattering their national vanity, he published, in the year one thousand five hundred and eighty nine, his valuable collection of voyages and discoveries made by Englishmen. In order to supply them with what information might be derived from the experience of the most successful foreign navigators, he translated some of the best accounts of the progress of the Spaniards and Portuguese in their voyages both to the East and West Indies, into the English tongue. He was consulted with respect to many of the attempts towards discovery or colonization during the latter part of Elizabeth's reign. He corresponded with the officers who

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conducted them, directed their researches to proper objects, and published the history of their exploits. By the zealous endeavours of a person, equally respected by men of rank and men of business, many of both orders formed an association to establish colonies in America, and petitioned the king for the sanction of his authority to warrant the execution of their plans.

James, who prided himself on his profound skill in the science of government, and who had turned his attention to consider the advantages which might be derived from colonies, at a time when he patronised a scheme for planting them in some of the ruder provinces of his ancient kingdom, with a view of introducing industry and civilization there,\* was now no less fond of directing the active genius of his English subjects, towards occupations not repugnant to his own pacific maxims, and listened with a favourable ear to their application. But as the extent as well as value of the American continent began now to be better known, a grant of the whole of such a vast region to any one body of men, however respectable, appeared to him an act of impolitic and profuse liberality. For this reason, he divided that portion of North America, which stretches

\* Hist. of Scotland, ii. 239.



stretches from the thirty-fourth to the forty-fifth degree of latitude, into two districts, nearly equal; the one called the first or south colony of Virginia, the other, the second or north colony. He authorized (1606, April 10) Sir Thomas Gates, Sir George Summers, Richard Hakluyt, and their associates, mostly resident in London, to settle any part of the former which they should choose, and vested in them a right of property to the land extending along the coast fifty miles on each side of the place of their first habitation, and reaching into the interior country a hundred miles. The latter district he allotted, as the place of settlement, to sundry knights, gentlemen, and merchants of Bristol, Plymouth, and other parts in the west of England, with a similar grant of territory. Neither the monarch who issued this charter, nor his subjects who received it, had any conception that they were proceeding to lay the foundation of mighty and opulent states. What James granted was nothing more than a simple charter of corporation to a trading company, empowering the members of it to have a common seal, and to act as a body politic. But as the object for which they associated was new, the plan established for the administration of their affairs was uncommon. Instead of the power usually granted to corporations, of electing officers and framing by-laws for the conduct of their

their own operations, the supreme government of the colonies to be settled, was vested in a council resident in England, to be named by the king, according to such laws and ordinances as should be given under his sign manual; and the subordinate jurisdiction was committed to a council resident in America, which was likewise to be nominated by the king, and to act conformably to his instructions. To this important clause, which regulated the form of their constitution, was added, the concession of several immunities, to encourage persons to settle in the intended colonies. Some of these were the same which had been granted to Gilbert and Raleigh; such as the securing to the emigrants and their descendants all the rights of denizens, in the same manner as if they had remained or had been born in England; and granting them the privilege of holding their lands in America by the freest and least burdensome tenure. Others were more favourable than those granted by Elizabeth. He permitted whatever was necessary for the sustenance or commerce of the new colonies to be exported from England, during the space of seven years, without paying any duty; and as a farther incitement to industry, he granted them liberty of trade with other nations, and appropriated the duty to be levied on foreign commodities, for twenty-one

ty-one years, as a fund for the benefit of the colony.\*

In this singular charter, the contents of which have been little attended to by the historians of America, some articles are as unfavourable to the rights of the colonists, as others are to the interest of the parent state. By placing the legislative and executive powers in a council nominated by the crown, and guided by its instructions, every person settling in America, seems to be bereaved of the noblest privilege of a free man; by the unlimited permission of trade with foreigners, the parent state is deprived of that exclusive commerce which has been deemed the chief advantage resulting from the establishment of colonies. But in the infancy of colonization, and without the guidance of observation or experience, the ideas of men with respect to the mode of forming new settlements, were not fully unfolded, or properly arranged. At a period when they could not foresee the future grandeur and importance of the communities which they were about to call into existence, they were ill qualified to concert the best plan for governing them. Besides, the English of that age, accustomed to the high prerogative and arbitrary rule of their monarchs, were not animated

\* Stith, Hist. of Virginia, p. 35. Append. p. 1. Purchas, v. 1683.

animated with such liberal sentiments, either concerning their own personal or political rights, as have become familiar in the more mature and improved state of their constitution.

Without hesitation or reluctance the proprietors of both colonies prepared to execute their respective plans; and under the authority of a charter, which would now be rejected with disdain, as a violent invasion of the sacred and inalienable rights of liberty, the first permanent settlements of the English in America were established. From this period, the progress of the two provinces of Virginia and New England form a regular and connected story. The former in the south, and the latter in the north, may be considered as the original and parent colonies; in imitation of which, and under whose shelter, all the others have been successively planted and reared.

The first attempts to occupy Virginia and New England were made by very feeble bodies of emigrants. As these settled, under great disadvantages, among tribes of savages, and in an uncultivated desert; as they attained gradually, after long struggles and many disasters, to that maturity of strength, and order of policy, which entitles them to be considered as respectable states, the history of their persevering



vering efforts merits particular attention. It will exhibit a spectacle no less striking than instructive, and presents an opportunity, which rarely occurs, of contemplating a society in the first moment of its political existence, and of observing how its spirit forms in its infant state, how its principles begin to unfold as it advances, and how those characteristic qualities, which distinguish its maturer age, are successively acquired. The account of the establishment of the other English colonies, undertaken at periods when the importance of such possessions was better understood, and effected by more direct and vigorous exertions of the parent state, is less interesting. I shall therefore relate the history of the two original colonies in detail. With respect to the subsequent settlements, some more general observations concerning the time, the motives, and circumstances of their establishment, will be sufficient. I begin with the history of Virginia, the most ancient and most valuable of the British colonies in North America.

Though many persons of distinction became proprietors in the company which undertook to plant a colony in Virginia, its funds seem not to have been considerable, and its first effort was certainly extremely feeble. A small vessel of a hundred tons, and two barks, under the command of Captain Newport, sailed  
(Dec.

(Dec. 19) with a hundred and five men, destined to remain in the country. Some of these were of respectable families, particularly a brother of the Earl of Northumberland, and several officers who had served with reputation in the reign of Elizabeth. Newport, I know not for what reason, followed the ancient course by the West Indies, and did not reach the coast of North America for four months (1607, April 26). But he approached it with better fortune than any former navigator; for having been driven, by the violence of a storm, to the northward of Roanoke, the place of his destination, the first land he discovered was a promontory which he called Cape Henry, the southern boundary of the Bay of Chesapeak. The English stood directly into that spacious inlet, which seemed to invite them to enter; and as they advanced, contemplated, with a mixture of delight and admiration, that grand reservoir, into which are poured the waters of all the vast rivers, which not only diffuse fertility through that district of America, but open the interior parts of the country to navigation, and render a commercial intercourse more extensive and commodious than in any other region of the globe. Newport, keeping along the southern shore, sailed up a river, which the natives called Powhatan, and to which he gave the name of James-River. After viewing its banks, during



during a run of above forty miles from its mouth, they all concluded that a country, where safe and convenient harbours seemed to be numerous, would be a more suitable station for a trading colony, than the shoally and dangerous coast to the south, on which their countrymen had formerly settled. Here then they determined to abide; and having chosen a proper spot for their residence, they gave this infant settlement the name of James-Town, which it still retains; and though it has never become either populous or opulent, it can boast of being the most ancient habitation of the English in the New World. But however well-chosen the situation might be, the members of the colony were far from availing themselves of its advantages. Violent animosities had broke out among some of their leaders, during their voyage to Virginia. These did not subside on their arrival there. The first deed of the council, which assumed the government in virtue of a commission brought from England under the seal of the company, and opened on the day after they landed, was an act of injustice. Captain Smith, who had been appointed a member of the council, was excluded from his seat at the board, by the mean jealousy of his colleagues, and not only reduced to the condition of a private man, but of one suspected and watched by his superiors. This diminution of his influence, and restraint

on his activity, was an essential injury to the colony, which at that juncture stood in need of the aid of both. For soon after they began to settle, the English were involved in a war with the natives, partly by their own indiscretion, and partly by the suspicion and ferocity of those barbarians. And although the Indians, scattered over the countries adjacent to James-River, were divided into independent tribes, so extremely feeble that hardly one of them could muster above two hundred warriors,\* they teased and annoyed an infant colony by their incessant hostilities. To this was added a calamity still more dreadful; the stock of provisions left for their subsistence, on the departure of their ships for England, (June 15) was so scanty, and of such bad quality, that a scarcity, approaching almost to absolute famine, soon followed. Such poor unwholesome fare brought on diseases, the violence of which was so much increased by the sultry heat of the climate, and the moisture of a country covered with wood, that before the beginning of September, one half of their number died, and most of the survivors were sickly and dejected. In such trying extremities, the comparative powers of every individual are discovered and called forth, and each naturally takes that station, and assumes that ascendant,

\* Purchas, vol. iv. 1692. Smith's Travels, p. 23.

ascendant, to which he is entitled by his talents and force of mind. Every eye was now turned towards Smith, and all willingly devolved on him that authority, of which they had formerly deprived him. His undaunted temper, deeply tinctured with the wild romantic spirit characteristic of military adventures in that age, was peculiarly suited to such a situation. The vigour of his constitution continued, fortunately, still unimpaired by disease, and his mind was never appalled by danger. He instantly adopted the only plan that could save them from destruction. He began by surrounding James-Town with such rude fortifications, as were a sufficient defence against the assaults of savages. He then marched, at the head of a small detachment, in quest of their enemies. Some tribes he gained by caresses and presents, and procured from them a supply of provisions. Others he attacked with open force; and defeating them on every occasion, whatever their superiority in numbers might be, compelled them to impart to him some portion of their winter stores. As the recompence of all his toils and dangers, he saw abundance and contentment re-established in the colony, and hoped that he should be able to maintain them in that happy state, until the arrival of ships from England in the spring: but in one of his excursions he was surprised by

by a numerous body of Indians, and in making his escape from them, after a gallant defence, he sunk to the neck in a swamp, and was obliged to surrender. Though he knew well what a dreadful fate awaits the prisoners of savages, his presence of mind did not forsake him. He shewed those who had taken him captive a mariner's compass, and amused them with so many wonderful accounts of its virtues, as filled them with astonishment and veneration, which began to operate very powerfully in his favour. They led him, however, in triumph through various parts of the country, and conducted him at last to Powhatan, the most considerable Sachim in that part of Virginia. There the doom of death being pronounced, he was led to the place of execution, and his head already bowed down to receive the fatal blow, when that fond attachment of the American women to their European invaders, the beneficial effects of which the Spaniards often experienced, interposed in his behalf. The favourite daughter of Powhatan rushed in between him and the executioner, and, by her intreaties and tears, prevailed on her father to spare his life. The beneficence of his deliverer, whom the early English writers dignify with the title of the Princess Pocahuntas, did not terminate here; she soon after procured his liberty, and sent him  
from



from time to time seasonable presents of provisions.\*

Smith, on his return to James-Town, found the colony reduced to thirty-eight persons, who, in despair, were preparing to abandon a country which did not seem destined to be the habitation of Englishmen. He employed caresses, threats, and even violence, in order to prevent them from executing this fatal resolution. With difficulty he prevailed on them to defer it so long, that the succour anxiously expected from England arrived. Plenty was instantly restored; a hundred new planters were added to their number, and an ample stock of whatever was requisite for clearing and sowing the ground was delivered to them. But an unlucky incident turned their attention from that species of industry which alone could render their situation comfortable. In a small stream of water that issued from a bank of sand near James-Town, a sediment of some shining mineral substance, which had some resemblance of gold, was discovered. At a time when the precious metals were conceived to be the peculiar and only valuable productions of the New World, when every mountain was supposed to contain a treasure, and every rivulet was searched for its golden sands, this appearance was fondly

\* Smith's Travels, p. 44, &c. Purchas, iv, 1704. Stith. p. 45, &c.

fondly considered as an infallible indication of a mine. Every hand was eager to dig; large quantities of this glittering dust were amassed. From some assay of its nature, made by an artist as unskilful as his companions were credulous, it was pronounced to be extremely rich. "There was now," (says Smith) "no talk, no hope, no work, but dig gold, wash gold, refine gold."\* With this imaginary wealth the first vessel returning to England was loaded, while the culture of the land, and every useful occupation, was totally neglected.

The effects of this fatal delusion were soon felt. Notwithstanding all the provident activity of Smith, in procuring corn from the natives by traffic or by force, the colony began to suffer as much as formerly from scarcity of food, and was wasted by the same distempers. In hopes of obtaining some relief, Smith proposed, as they had not hitherto extended their researches beyond the countries contiguous to James-River, to open an intercourse with the more remote tribes, and to examine into the state of culture and population among them. The execution of this arduous design he undertook himself, in a small open boat, with a feeble crew, and a very scanty stock of provisions. He began his survey at Cape Charles,  
and

\* Smith's Travels, p. 53.



and in two different excursions, which continued above four months, he advanced as far as the river Susquehannah, which flows into the bottom of the Bay. He visited all the countries both on the east and west shores; he entered most of the considerable creeks; he sailed up many of the great rivers as far as their falls. He traded with some tribes; he fought with others; he observed the nature of the territory which they occupied, their mode of subsistence, the peculiarities in their manners; and left among all a wonderful admiration either of the beneficence or valour of the English. After sailing above three thousand miles in a paltry vessel, ill fitted for such an extensive navigation, during which the hardships to which he was exposed, as well as the patience with which he endured, and the fortitude with which he surmounted them, equal whatever is related of the celebrated Spanish discoverers in their most daring enterprizes; he returned to James-Town; he brought with him an account of that large portion of the American continent now comprehended in the two provinces of Virginia and Maryland,\* so full and exact, that after the progress of information and research for a century and a half, his map exhibits no inaccurate view of both countries, and is the original upon which all subsequent

\* Smith's Travels, p. 65, &c.

sequent delineations and descriptions have been formed.\*

But, whatever pleasing prospect of future benefit might open upon this complete discovery of a country, formed by nature to be the seat of an exclusive commerce, it afforded but little relief for their present wants. The colony still depended for subsistence chiefly on supplies from the natives; as, after all the efforts of their own industry, hardly thirty acres of ground were yet cleared so as to be capable of culture.† By Smith's attention, however, the stores of the English were so regularly filled, that for some time they felt no considerable distress; and at this juncture a change was made in the constitution of the company, which seemed to promise an increase of their security and happiness. That supreme direction of all the company's operations, which the king by his charter had reserved to himself, discouraged persons of rank or property from becoming members of a society so dependant on the arbitrary will of the crown. Upon a representation of this to James, (1609, May 23) he granted them a new charter, with more ample privileges. He enlarged the boundaries of the colony; he rendered the powers of the company, as a corporation, more explicit

\* Stith, p. 83.

† Stith, p. 97.

plicit and complete; he abolished the jurisdiction of the council resident in Virginia; he vested the government entirely in a council residing in London; he granted to the proprietors of the company the right of electing the persons who were to compose this council, by a majority of voices; he authorized this council to establish such laws, orders, and forms of government and magistracy, for the colony and plantation, as they in their discretion should think to be fittest for the good of the adventurers and inhabitants there; he empowered them to nominate a governor to have the administration of affairs in the colony, and to carry their orders into execution.\* In consequence of these concessions, the company having acquired the power of regulating all its own transactions, the number of proprietors increased, and among them we find the most respectable names in the nation.

The first deed of the new council was to appoint Lord Delaware governor and captain-general of their colony in Virginia. To a person of his rank, those high-sounding titles could be no allurements; and by his thorough acquaintance with the progress and state of the settlement, he knew enough of the labour and difficulty with which an infant colony is reared,

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\* Stith. Append. 8

ed, to expect any thing but anxiety and care in discharging the duties of that delicate office. But from zeal to promote an establishment which he expected to prove so highly beneficial to his country, he was willing to relinquish all the comforts of an honourable station, to undertake a long voyage to settle in an uncultivated region, destitute of every accommodation to which he had been accustomed, and where he foresaw that toil and trouble and danger awaited him. But as he could not immediately leave England, the council dispatched Sir Thomas Gates and Sir George Summers, the former of whom had been appointed lieutenant-general, and the latter admiral, with nine ships and five hundred planters. They carried with them commissions, by which they were empowered to supersede the jurisdiction of the former council, to proclaim Lord Delaware governor, and, until he should arrive, to take the administration of affairs into their own hands. A violent hurricane separated the vessel in which Gates and Summers had embarked, from the rest of the fleet, and stranded it on the coast of Bermudas. The other ships arrived (August 11) safely at James-Town. But the fate of their commanders was unknown. Their commission for new-modelling the government, and all other public papers, were supposed to be lost, together with them. The present form of  
government,



government, however, was held to be abolished. No legal warrant could be produced for establishing any other. Smith was not in a condition at this juncture to assert his own rights, or to act with his wonted vigour. By an accidental explosion of gunpowder, he had been so miserably scorched and mangled, that he was incapable of moving, and under the necessity of committing himself to the guidance of his friends, who carried him aboard one of the ships returning to England, in hopes that he might recover by more skilful treatment than he could meet with in Virginia.\*

After his departure, every thing tended fast to the wildest anarchy. Faction and discontent had often risen so high among the old settlers, that they could hardly be kept within bounds. The spirit of the new-comers was too ungovernable to bear any restraint. Several among them of better rank were such dissipated hopeless young men, as their friends were glad to send out in quest of whatever fortune might betide them in a foreign land. Of the lower order, many were so profligate or desperate, that their country was happy to throw them out as nuisances in society. Such persons were little capable of the regular subordination, the strict œconomy, and persevering

\* Purchas, iv. 1734, &c. Smith's Travels, p. 89. Stith, p. 102, &c.

ing industry, which their situation required. The Indians observing their misconduct, and that every precaution for sustenance or safety was neglected, not only withheld the supplies of provisions which they were accustomed to furnish, but harassed them with continual hostilities. All their subsistence was derived from the stores which they had brought from England; these were soon consumed; then the domestic animals sent out to breed in the country were devoured; and by this inconsiderate waste, they were reduced to such extremity of famine, as not only to eat the most nauseous and unwholesome roots and berries, but to feed on the bodies of the Indians whom they slew, and even on those of their companions who sunk under the oppression of such complicated distress. In less than six months, of five hundred persons whom Smith left in Virginia, only sixty remained; and these so feeble and dejected, that they could not have survived for ten days, if succour had not arrived from a quarter whence they did not expect it.\*

When Gates and Summers were thrown ashore on Bermudas, fortunately not a single person on board their ship perished. A considerable part of their provisions and stores too was saved, and in that delightful spot, Nature, with

\* Stith, p. 116. Purchas, iv. 1748.



with spontaneous bounty, presented to them such a variety of her productions, that a hundred and fifty people subsisted in affluence for ten months on an uninhabited island. Impatient, however, to escape from a place where they were cut off from all intercourse with mankind, they set about building two barks with such tools and materials as they had, and by amazing efforts of perseverance and ingenuity they finished them. In these they embarked, and steered directly towards Virginia, in hopes of finding an ample consolation for all their toils and dangers in the embraces of their companions, and amidst the comforts of a flourishing colony. After a more prosperous navigation than they could have expected in their ill-constructed vessels, they landed (May 23) at James-Town. But instead of that joyful interview for which they fondly looked, a spectacle presented itself which struck them with horror. They beheld the miserable remainder of their countrymen emaciated with famine and sickness, sunk in despair, and in their figure and looks rather resembling spectres than human beings. As Gates and Summers, in full confidence of finding plenty of provisions in Virginia, had brought with them no larger stock than was deemed necessary for their own support during the voyage, their inability to afford relief to their countrymen, added to the anguish with which they

they

they viewed this unexpected scene of distress. Nothing now remained but instantly to abandon a country, where it was impossible to subsist any longer; and though all that could be found in the stores of the colony, when added to what remained of the stock brought from Bermudas, did not amount to more than was sufficient to support them for sixteen days, at the most scanty allowance, they set sail, in hopes of being able to reach Newfoundland, where they expected to be relieved by their countrymen, employed at that season in the fishery there.\*

But it was not the will of Heaven that all the labour of the English, in planting this colony, as well as all their hopes of benefit from its future posterity, should be forever lost. Before Gates, and the melancholy companions of his voyage, had reached the mouth of James-River, they were met by Lord Delaware, with three ships, that brought a large recruit of provisions, a considerable number of new settlers, and every thing requisite for defence or cultivation. By persuasion and authority he prevailed on them to return to James-Town, where they found their fort, their magazines, and

\* A minute and curious account of the shipwreck of Gates and Summers, and of their adventures in Bermudas, was composed by Strachy, a gentleman who accompanied them, and was published by Purchas, iv. 1734.

and houses entire, which Sir Thomas Gates, by some happy chance, had preserved from being set on fire at the time of their departure. A society so feeble and disordered in its frame required a tender and skilful hand to cherish it, and restore its vigour. This it found in Lord Delaware; he searched into the causes of their misfortunes, as far as he could discover them, amidst the violence of their mutual accusations; but instead of exerting his power in punishing crimes that were past, he employed his prudence in healing their dissensions, and in guarding against a repetition of the same fatal errors. By unwearied assiduity, by the respect due to an amiable and beneficent character, by knowing how to mingle severity with indulgence, and when to assume the dignity of his office, as well as when to display the gentleness natural to his own temper, he gradually reconciled men corrupted by anarchy to subordination and discipline, he turned the attention of the idle and profligate to industry, and taught the Indians again to reverence and dread the English name (1611, March 28). Under such an administration, the colony began once more to assume a promising appearance; when unhappily for it, a complication of diseases brought on by the climate obliged Lord Delaware to quit the country;\* the government of which he committed to Mr. Percy. He

\* Stith, p. 117. Purchas, iv. 1764.

He was soon superseded (May 10) by the arrival of Sir Thomas Dale; in whom the company had vested more absolute authority than in any of his predecessors, empowering him to rule by martial law; a short code of which, founded on the practice of the armies in the Low Countries, the most rigid military school at that time in Europe, they sent out with him. This system of government is so violent and arbitrary, that even the Spaniards themselves had not ventured to introduce it into their settlements; for among them, as soon as a plantation began, and the arts of peace succeeded to the operations of war, the jurisdiction of the civil magistrate was uniformly established. But however unconstitutional or oppressive this may appear, it was adopted by the advice of Sir Francis Bacon, the most enlightened philosopher, and one of the most eminent lawyers of the age.\* The company, well acquainted with the inefficacy of every method which they had hitherto employed for restraining the unruly mutinous spirits which they had to govern, eagerly adopted a plan that had the sanction of such high authority to recommend it. Happily for the colony, Sir Thomas Dale, who was entrusted with this dangerous power, exercised it with prudence and moderation. By the vigour  
and

\* Bacon, Essay on Plantations, p. 3.



which the summary mode of military punishment gave to his administration, he introduced into the colony more perfect order than had ever been established there; and at the same time he tempered its vigour with so much discretion, that no alarm seems to have been given by this formidable innovation.\*

The regular form which the colony now began to assume, (1612, March 12) induced the King to issue a new charter for the encouragement of the adventurers, by which he not only confirmed all their former privileges, and prolonged the term of exemption from payment of duties on the commodities exported by them, but granted them more extensive property, as well as more ample jurisdiction. All the islands lying within three hundred leagues of the coast were annexed to the Province of Virginia. In consequence of this, the company took possession of Bermudas, and the other small isles discovered by Gates and Summers; and at the same time prepared to send out a considerable reinforcement to the colony at James-Town. The expence of those extraordinary efforts was defrayed by the profits of a lottery, which amounted nearly to thirty thousand pounds. This expedient, they were authorized to employ by their

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\* Stith, p. 122.



new charter;\* and it is remarkable, as the first instance, in the English history, of any public countenance given to this pernicious seducing mode of levying money. But the House of Commons, which towards the close of this reign began to observe every measure of government with jealous attention, having remonstrated against the institution as unconstitutional and impolitic, James recalled the licence under the sanction of which it had been established.†

By the severe discipline of martial law, the activity of the colonists was forced into a proper direction, and exerted itself in useful industry. This, aided by a fertile soil and favourable climate, soon enabled them to raise such a large stock of provisions, that they were no longer obliged to trust for subsistence to the precarious supplies which they obtained or extorted from the Indians. In proportion as the English became more independent, the natives courted their friendship upon more equal terms. The happy effects of this were quickly felt. Sir Thomas Dale concluded a treaty with one of their most powerful and warlike tribes, situated on the River Chickahominy, in which they consented to acknowledge themselves subjects of the King of Great Britain.

\* Stith, p. 191. Appendix, 23, &c.

† Chalmers' Annals, i. 32.

Britain, to assume henceforth the name of Englishmen, to send a body of their warriors to the assistance of the English, as often as they took the field against an enemy, and to deposit annually a stipulated quantity of Indian corn in the store-houses of the colony.\* An event, which the early historians of Virginia relate with peculiar satisfaction, prepared the way for this union. Pocahuntas, the favourite daughter of the great Chief Powhatan, to whose intercession Captain Smith was indebted for his life, persevered in her partial attachment to the English; and as she frequently visited their settlements, where she was always received with respectful hospitality, her admiration of their arts and manners continued to increase. During this intercourse, her beauty, which is represented as far superior to that of her countrywomen, made such impression on the heart of Mr. Rolfe, a young man of rank in the colony, that he warmly solicited her to accept of him as a husband. Where manners are simple, courtship is not tedious. Neither artifice prevents, nor ceremony forbids the heart from declaring its sentiments. Pocahuntas readily gave her consent; Dale encouraged the alliance, and Powhatan did not disapprove it. The marriage was celebrated with extraordinary pomp; and from that period a friendly

\* Hamer Solida Narratio, ap. de Bry. Pars x. p. 33. Stith, p. 139.

friendly correspondence subsisted between the colony and all the tribes subject to Powhatan, or that stood in awe of his power. Rolfe and his Princess, (for by that name the writers of the last age always distinguished her) set out for England, where she was received by James and his Queen with the respect suited to her birth. Being carefully instructed in the principles of the Christian faith, she was publicly baptized, but died a few years after, on her return to America, leaving one son; from whom are sprung some of the most respectable families in Virginia, who boast of their descent from the race of the ancient rulers of their country.\* But notwithstanding the visible good effects of that alliance, none of Rolfe's countrymen seem to have imitated the example which he set them, of intermarrying with the natives. Of all the Europeans who have settled in America, the English have availed themselves least of this obvious method of conciliating the affection of its original inhabitants; and, either from the shyness conspicuous in their national character, or from the want of that pliant facility of manners which accommodates itself to every situation, they have been more averse than the French and Portuguese, or even the Spaniards, from incorporating

\* Hamer Solida Narratio, ap. de Bry, Pars x. p. 21. Stith, p. 129. 146. Smith's Travels, p. 113. 121.

corporating with the native Americans. The Indians, courting such an union, offered their daughters in marriage to their new guests; and when they did not accept of the proffered alliance, they naturally imputed it to pride and to their contempt of them as an inferior order of beings.\*

During the interval of tranquillity procured by the alliance with Powhatan, an important change was made in the state of the colony. Hitherto no right of private property in land had been established. The fields that were cleared had been cultivated by the joint labour of the colonists; their product was carried to the common store-houses, and distributed weekly to every family, according to its number and exigencies. A society, destitute of the first advantage resulting from social union, was not formed to prosper. Industry, when not excited by the idea of property in what was acquired by its own efforts, made no vigorous exertion. The head had no inducement to contrive, nor the hand to labour. The idle and improvident trusted entirely to what was issued from the common store; the assiduity even of the sober and attentive relaxed, when they perceived that others were to reap the fruit of their toil; and it was computed, that the

\* Beverley's Hist. of Virg. p. 25.



the united industry of the colony did not accomplish as much work in a week as might have been performed in a day, if each individual had laboured on his own account. In order to remedy this, Sir Thomas Dale divided a considerable portion of the land into small lots, and granted one of these to each individual in full property. From the moment that industry had the certain prospect of a recompence, it advanced with rapid progress. The articles of primary necessity were cultivated with so much attention as secured the means of subsistence; and such schemes of improvement were formed as prepared the way for the introduction of opulence into the colony.\*

The industrious spirit, which began to rise among the planters, was soon directed towards a new object; and they applied to it for some time with such inconsiderate ardour as was productive of fatal consequences. The culture of tobacco, which has since become the staple of Virginia, and the source of its prosperity, was introduced about this time (1616) into the colony. As the taste for that weed continued to increase in England, notwithstanding the zealous declamations of James against it, the tobacco imported from Virginia came to a ready market; and though it  
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\* Smith's Travels, p. 114. Stith, p. 131.



was so much inferior in quality or in estimation to that raised by the Spaniards in the West Indian islands, that a pound of the latter sold for eighteen shillings, and of the former for no more than three shillings, it yielded a considerable profit. Allured by the prospect of such a certain and quick return, every other species of industry was neglected. The land which ought to have been reserved for raising provisions, and even the streets of James-Town, were planted with tobacco. Various regulations were framed to restrain this ill-directed activity. But from eagerness for present gain, the planters disregarded every admonition. The means of subsistence became so scanty as forced them to renew their demands upon the Indians, who, seeing no end of those exactions, their antipathy to the English name revived with additional rancour, and they began to form schemes of vengeance, with the secrecy and silence peculiar to Americans.\*

Meanwhile the colony, notwithstanding this error in its operations, and the cloud that was gathering over its head, continued to wear an aspect of prosperity. Its numbers increased by successive migrations; the quantity of tobacco exported became every year more considerable, and

\* Stith, p. 140. 147. 164. 168. Smith, p. 140. Purchas, iv. 1787.

and several of the planters were not only in an easy situation, but advancing fast to opulence;\* and by two events, which happened nearly at the same time, both population and industry were greatly promoted. - As few women had hitherto ventured to encounter the hardships which were unavoidable in an unknown and uncultivated country, most of the colonists, constrained to live single, considered themselves as no more than sojourners in a land to which they were not attached by the tender ties of a family and children. In order to induce them to settle there, the company took advantage of the apparent tranquillity in the country, to send out a considerable number of young women, of humble birth, indeed, but of unexceptionable character, and encouraged the planters, by premiums and immunities, to marry them.† These new companions were received with such fondness, and many of them so comfortably established, as invited others to follow their example, and by degrees thoughtless adventurers, assuming the sentiments of virtuous citizens and of provident fathers of families, became solicitous about the prosperity of a country, which they now considered as their own. As the colonists began to form more extensive plans of industry, they were unexpectedly furnished with means  
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\* Smith, p. 139.

† Stith, p. 166. 177.

of executing them with greater facility. A Dutch ship from the Coast of Guinea, having sailed up James-River, sold a part of her cargo of negroes to the planters;\* and as that hardy race was found more capable of enduring fatigue under a sultry climate than Europeans, their number has been increased by continual importation; their aid seems now to be essential to the existence of the colony, and the greater part of field labour in Virginia is performed by servile hands.

But as the condition of the colony improved, the spirit of its members became more independent. To Englishmen the summary and severe decisions of martial law, however tempered by the mildness of their governors, appeared intolerably oppressive; and they longed to recover the privileges to which they had been accustomed under the liberal form of government in their native country. In compliance with this spirit, Sir George Yeardley, in the year 1619, called the first general assembly that was ever held in Virginia; and the numbers of the people were now so increased, and their settlements so dispersed, that eleven corporations appeared by their representatives in this convention, where they were permitted to assume legislative power, and to exercise the

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\* Beverley, p. 37.

noblest function of free men. The laws enacted in it seem neither to have been many, nor of great importance; but the meeting was highly acceptable to the people, as they now beheld among themselves an image of the English constitution, which they revered as the most perfect model of free government. In order to render this resemblance more complete, and the rights of the planters more certain, the company issued a charter (July 24) or ordinance, which gave a legal and permanent form to the government of the colony. The supreme legislative authority in Virginia, in imitation of that in Great Britain, was divided and lodged partly in the governor, who held the place of the sovereign; partly in a council of state named by the company, which possessed some of the distinctions, and exercised some of the functions belonging to the peerage; partly in a general council or assembly composed of the representatives of the people, in which were vested powers and privileges similar to those of the House of Commons. In both these councils all questions were to be determined by the majority of voices, and a negative was reserved to the governor; but no law or ordinance, though approved of by all the three members of the legislature, was to be of force, until it was ratified in England by a general court of the company, and returned under



under its seal.\* Thus the constitution of the colony was fixed, and the members of it are henceforth to be considered, not merely as servants of a commercial company, dependant on the will and orders of their superior, but as free men and citizens.

The natural effect of that happy change in their condition was an increase of their industry. The product of tobacco in Virginia was now equal, not only to the consumption of it in Great Britain,† but could furnish some quantity for a foreign market. The company opened a trade for it with Holland, and established warehouses in Middleburgh and Flushing. James, and his privy council, alarmed at seeing the commerce of a commodity, for which the demand was daily increasing, turned into a channel that tended to the diminution of the revenue, by depriving it of a considerable duty imposed on the importation of tobacco,

\* Stith, Appendix, p. 32, &c.

† It is a matter of some curiosity to trace the progress of the consumption of this unnecessary commodity. The use of tobacco seems to have been first introduced into England about the year 1586. Possibly a few sea-faring persons may have acquired a relish for it by their intercourse with the Spaniards previous to that period; but the use of it cannot be denominated a national habit sooner than the time I have mentioned. Upon an average of the seven years immediately preceding the year 1622, the whole import of tobacco into England amounted to a hundred and forty-two thousand and eighty-five pounds weight. Stith, p. 246. From this it appears, that the taste had spread with a rapidity which is remarkable. But how inconsiderable is that quantity to what is now consumed in Great Britain!



bacco, interposed with vigour to check this innovation. Some expedient was found, by which the matter was adjusted for the present; but it is remarkable as the first instance of a difference in sentiment between the parent state and the colony, concerning their respective rights. The former concluded, that the trade of the colony should be confined to England, and all its productions be landed there. The latter claimed, not only the general privilege of Englishmen, to carry their commodities to the best market, but pleaded the particular concessions in their charter, by which an unlimited freedom of commerce seemed to be granted to them.\* The time for a more full discussion of this important question was not yet arrived.

But while the colony continued to increase so fast, that settlements were scattered, not only along the banks of James and York Rivers, but began to extend to the Rapahannock, and even to the Potowmack, the English, relying on their own numbers and deceived by this appearance of prosperity, lived in full security. They neither attended to the movements of the Indians, nor suspected their machinations, and though surrounded by a people whom they might have known from experience

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\* Stith, p. 200, &c.

to be both artful and vindictive, they neglected every precaution for their own safety that was requisite in such a situation. Like the peaceful inhabitants of a society completely established, they were no longer soldiers but citizens, and were so intent on what was subservient to the comfort or embellishment of civil life, that every martial exercise began to be laid aside as unnecessary. The Indians, whom they commonly employed as hunters, were furnished with fire-arms, and taught to use them with dexterity. They were permitted to frequent the habitations of the English at all hours, and received as innocent visitants whom there was no reason to dread. This inconsiderate security enabled the Indians to prepare for the execution of that plan of vengeance, which they meditated with all the deliberate forethought which is agreeable to their temper. Nor did they want a leader capable of conducting their schemes with address. On the death of Powhatan, in the year 1618, Opechancanough succeeded him, not only as wirowanee or chief of his own tribe, but in that extensive influence over all the Indian nations of Virginia, which induced the English writers to distinguish them by the name of Emperor. According to the Indian tradition, he was not a native of Virginia, but came from a distant country to the south-west, possibly from some province of the

the Mexican Empire.\* But as he was conspicuous for all the qualities of highest estimation among savages, a fearless courage, great strength and agility of body, and crafty policy, he quickly rose to eminence and power. Soon after his elevation to the supreme command, a general massacre of the English seems to have been resolved upon; and during four years, the means of perpetrating it with the greatest facility and success were concerted with amazing secrecy. All the tribes contiguous to the English settlements were successively gained, except those on the Eastern shore, from whom, on account of their peculiar attachment to their new neighbours, every circumstance that might discover what they intended was carefully concealed. To each tribe its station was allotted, and the part it was to act prescribed. On the morning of the day consecrated to vengeance, (March 22) each was at the place of rendezvous appointed, while the English were so little aware of the impending destruction, that they received with unsuspecting hospitality, several persons sent by Opechancanough, under pretext of delivering presents of venison and fruits, but in reality to observe their motions. Finding them perfectly secure, at mid-day, the moment that was previously fixed for this deed of horror, the  
Indians

\* Beverley, p. 51.

Indians rushed at once upon them in all their different settlements, and murdered men, women, and children, with undistinguishing rage, and that rancorous cruelty with which savages treat their enemies. In one hour, nearly a fourth part of the whole colony was cut off, almost without knowing by whose hands they fell. The slaughter would have been universal, if compassion, or a sense of duty, had not moved a converted Indian, to whom the secret was communicated the night before the massacre, to reveal it to his master in such time as to save James-Town, and some adjacent settlements; and if the English, in other districts, had not run to their arms with resolution prompted by despair, and defended themselves so bravely as to repulse their assailants, who, in the execution of their plan, did not discover courage equal to the sagacity and art with which they had concerted it.\*

But though the blow was thus prevented from descending with its full effect, it proved very grievous to an infant colony. In some settlements not a single Englishman escaped. Many persons of prime note in the colony, and among these several members of the council, were slain. The survivors, overwhelmed with grief, astonishment, and terror, abandoned all  
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\* Stith, p. 208, &c. Purchas, iv. 1788, &c.

their remote settlements, and, crowding together for safety to James-Town, did not occupy a territory of greater extent than had been planted soon after the arrival of their countrymen in Virginia. Confined within those narrow boundaries, they were less intent on schemes of industry than on thoughts of revenge. Every man took arms. A bloody war against the Indians commenced; and, bent on exterminating the whole race, neither old nor young were spared. The conduct of the Spaniards in the Southern regions of America was openly proposed as the most proper model to imitate;\* and, regardless like them of those principles of faith, honour, and humanity, which regulate hostility among civilized nations, and set bounds to its rage, the English deemed every thing allowable that tended to accomplish their designs. They hunted the Indians like wild beasts, rather than enemies; and as the pursuit of them to their places of retreat in the woods, which covered their country, was both difficult and dangerous, they endeavoured to allure them from their inaccessible fastnesses, by offers of peace and promises of oblivion, made with such an artful appearance of sincerity as deceived their crafty leader, and induced them (1623) to return to their former settlements, and resume  
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\* Stith, p. 233.



their usual peaceful occupations. The behaviour of the two people seemed now to be perfectly reversed. The Indians, like men acquainted with the principles of integrity and good faith, on which the intercourse between nations is founded, confided in the reconciliation, and lived in absolute security without suspicion of danger; while the English, with perfidious craft, were preparing to imitate savages in their revenge and cruelty. On the approach of harvest, when they knew an hostile attack would be most formidable and fatal, they fell suddenly upon all the Indian plantations, murdered every person on whom they could lay hold, and drove the rest to the woods, where so many perished with hunger, that some of the tribes nearest to the English were totally extirpated. This atrocious deed, which the perpetrators laboured to represent as a necessary act of retaliation, was followed by some happy effects. It delivered the colony so entirely from any dread of the Indians, that its settlements began again to extend, and its industry to revive.

But unfortunately at this juncture the state of the company in England, in which the property of Virginia and the government of the colony settled there were vested, prevented it from seconding the efforts of the planters, by such a reinforcement of men, and such a supply

ply of necessaries, as were requisite to replace what they had lost. The company was originally composed of many adventurers, and increased so fast by the junction of new members, allured by the prospect of gain, or the desire of promoting a scheme of public utility, that its general courts formed a numerous assembly.\* The operation of every political principle and passion, that spread through the kingdom, was felt in those popular meetings, and influenced their decisions. As towards the close of James's reign more just and enlarged sentiments with respect to constitutional liberty were diffused among the people, they came to understand their rights better, and to assert them with greater boldness; a distinction formerly little known, but now familiar in English policy, began to be established between the court and country parties, and the leaders of each endeavoured to derive power and consequence from every quarter. Both exerted themselves with emulation, in order to obtain the direction of a body so numerous and respectable as the company of Virginian adventurers. In consequence of this, business had been conducted in every general court for some years, not with the temperate spirit of merchants deliberating concerning their mutual interest, but with the animosity and violence natural to numerous

\* Stith, p. 272. 276.

merous assemblies, by which rival factions contend for superiority.\*

As the king did not often assemble the great council of the nation in parliament, the general courts of the company became a theatre, on which popular orators displayed their talents; the proclamations of the crown, and acts of the privy council, with respect to the commerce and police of the colony, were canvassed there with freedom, and censured with severity, ill-suited to the lofty ideas which James entertained of his own wisdom, and the extent of his prerogative. In order to check this growing spirit of discussion, the ministers employed all their address and influence to gain as many members of the company as might give them the direction of their deliberations. But so unsuccessful were they in this attempt, that every measure proposed by them was reprobated by a vast majority, and sometimes without any reason, but because they were the proposers of it. James, little favourable to the power of any popular assembly, and weary of contending with one over which he had laboured in vain to obtain an ascendant, began to entertain thoughts of dissolving the company, and of new-modelling its constitution. Pretexts, neither unplaussible, nor destitute of some

\* Stith, p. 229, &c. Chalmers, p. 59.

some foundation, seemed to justify this measure. The slow progress of the colony, the large sums of money expended, and great number of men who had perished in attempting to plant it, the late massacre by the Indians, and every disaster that had befallen the English from their first migration to America, were imputed solely to the inability of a numerous company to conduct an enterprise so complex and arduous. The nation felt sensibly its disappointment in a scheme in which it had engaged with sanguine expectations of advantage, and wished impatiently for such an impartial scrutiny into former proceedings, as might suggest more salutary measures in the future administration of the colony. The present state of its affairs, as well as the wishes of the people, seemed to call for the interposition of the crown; and James, eager to display the superiority of his royal wisdom, in correcting those errors into which the company had been betrayed by inexperience in the arts of government, boldly undertook the work of reformation. Without regarding the rights conveyed to the company by their charter, and without the formality of any judicial proceeding for annulling it, he, by virtue of his prerogative, issued a commission, (1623, May 9) empowering some of the judges, and other persons of note, to examine into all the transactions of the company from its first establishment, and  
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to lay the result of their inquiries, together with their opinion concerning the most effectual means of rendering the colony more prosperous,\* before the privy council. At the same time, by a strain of authority still higher, he ordered all the records and papers of the company to be seized, and two of its principal officers to be arrested. Violent and arbitrary as these acts of authority may now appear, the commissioners carried on their inquiry without any obstruction but what arose from some feeble and ineffectual remonstrances of the company. The commissioners, though they conducted their scrutiny with much activity and vigour,† did not communicate any of their proceedings to the company; but their report, with respect to its operations, seems to have been very unfavourable, as the king, in consequence of it, (October 8) signified to the company, his intention of vesting the supreme government of the company in a governor and twelve assistants, to be resident in England, and the executive power in a council of twelve, which should reside in Virginia. The governor and assistants were to be originally appointed by the king. Future vacancies were to be supplied by the governor and his assistants, but their nomination was not to take effect until it should be ratified by the privy council. The twelve counsellors

\* Stith, p. 288.

† Smith's Travels, p. 165, &amp;c.



counsellors in Virginia were to be chosen by the governor and assistants; and this choice was likewise subjected to the review of the privy council. With an intention to quiet the minds of the colonists, it was declared, that private property should be deemed sacred; and for the more effectual security of it, all grants of lands from the former company were to be confirmed by the new one. In order to facilitate the execution of this plan, the king required the company instantly to surrender its charter into his hands.\*

But here James and his ministers encountered a spirit, of which they seem not to have been aware. They found the members of the company unwilling tamely to relinquish rights of franchises conveyed to them with such legal formality, that upon faith in their validity they had expended considerable sums;† and still more averse to the abolition of a popular form of government, in which every proprietor had a voice, in order to subject a colony, in which they were deeply interested, to the dominion of a small junto absolutely dependent on the crown. Neither promises nor threats could induce them to depart from these sentiments; and in a general court (October 20) the king's proposal was almost unanimously rejected, and

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\* Stith, p. 293.

† Chalmers, p. 61.

a resolution taken to defend to the utmost their chartered rights, if these should be called in question in any court of justice. James, highly offended at their presumption in daring to oppose his will, directed a writ (Nov. 10) of *quo warranto* to be issued against the company, that the validity of its charter might be tried in the Court of King's Bench; and in order to aggravate the charge by collecting additional proofs of mal-administration, he appointed some persons, in whom he could confide, to repair to Virginia to inspect the state of the colony, and inquire into the conduct of the company, and of its officers there.

The law-suit in the King's Bench did not hang long in suspense. It terminated, as was usual in that reign, in a decision perfectly consonant to the wishes of the monarch. The charter was forfeited, the company was dissolved, and all the rights and privileges conferred upon it returned to the king, from whom they flowed (June, 1624.)\*

Some writers, particularly Stith, the most intelligent and best informed historian of Virginia, mention the dissolution of the company as a most disastrous event to the colony. Animated with liberal sentiments, imbibed in an  
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\* Rymer, vol. xvii. p. 618, &c. Chalmers, p. 62.

age when the principles of liberty were more fully unfolded than under the reign of James, they viewed his violent and arbitrary proceedings on this occasion with such indignation, that their abhorrence of the means which he employed to accomplish his design, seems to have rendered them incapable of contemplating its effects with discernment and candour. There is not perhaps any mode of governing an infant colony less friendly to its liberty, than the dominion of an exclusive corporation, possessed of all the powers which James had conferred upon the company of adventurers in Virginia. During several years the colonists can hardly be considered in any other light than as servants to the company, nourished out of its stores, bound implicitly to obey its orders, and subjected to the most rigorous of all forms of government, that of martial law. Even after the native spirit of Englishmen began to rouse under oppression, and had extorted from their superiors the right of enacting laws for the government of that community of which they were members, as no act, though approved of by all the branches of the provincial legislature, was held to be of legal force, until it was ratified by a general court in England, the company still retained the paramount authority in its own hands. Nor was the power of the company more favourable to the prosperity of the colony, than to its freedom. A  
numerous

numerous body of merchants, as long as its operations are purely commercial, may carry them on with discernment and success. But the mercantile spirit seems ill adapted to conduct an enlarged and liberal plan of civil policy, and colonies have seldom grown up to maturity and vigour under its narrow and interested regulations. To the unavoidable defects in administration which this occasioned, were added errors arising from inexperience. The English merchants of that age had not those extensive views which a general commerce opens to such as have the direction of it. When they first began to venture out of the beaten track, they groped their way with timidity and hesitation. Unacquainted with the climate and soil of America, and ignorant of the productions best suited to them, they seem to have had no settled plan of improvement, and their schemes were continually varying. Their system of government was equally fluctuating. In the course of eighteen years ten different persons presided over the province as chief governors. No wonder that under such administration all the efforts to give vigour and stability to the colony should prove abortive, or produce only slender effects. These efforts, however, when estimated according to the ideas of that age, either with respect to commerce or to policy, were very considerable, and conducted with astonishing perseverance.



Above an hundred and fifty thousand pounds were expended in this first attempt to plant an English colony in America;\* and more than nine thousand persons were sent out from the mother country to people this new settlement. At the dissolution of the company, the nation, in return for this waste of treasure and of people, did not receive from Virginia an annual importation of commodities exceeding twenty thousand pounds in value; and the colony was so far from having added strength to the state by an increase of population, that, in the year one thousand six hundred and twenty-four, scarcely two thousand persons survived,† a wretched remnant of the numerous emigrants who had flocked thither, with sanguine expectations of a very different fate.

The company, like all unprosperous societies, fell unpitied. The violent hand with which prerogative had invaded its rights was forgotten, and new prospects of success opened, under a form of government exempt from all the defects to which past disasters were imputed. The king and the nation concurred with equal ardour in resolving to encourage the colony. Soon after the final judgment in the Court of King's Bench against the company, James appointed a council of twelve persons.

\* Smith's Travels, p. 42. 167. † Chalmers' Annals, p. 69.



persons to take the temporary direction of affairs in Virginia, (August 26) that he might have leisure to frame with deliberate consideration proper regulations for the permanent government of the colony.\* Pleased with such an opportunity of exercising his talents as a legislator, he began to turn his attention towards the subject; but death prevented him from completing his plan.

Charles I. on his accession to the throne, (1625, March 27) adopted all his father's maxims with respect to the colony in Virginia. He declared it to be a part of the empire annexed to the crown, and immediately subordinate to its jurisdiction; he conferred the title of Governor on Sir George Yardely, and appointed him, in conjunction with a council of twelve, and a secretary, to exercise supreme authority there, and enjoined them to conform in every point to such instructions as from time to time they might receive from him.† From the tenor of the king's commission, as well as from the known spirit of his policy, it is apparent, that he intended to vest every power of government, both legislative and executive, in the governor and council, without recourse to the representatives of the people, as possessing a right to enact laws for the community, or  
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\* Rymer, xvii. 612, &c.

† Ibid. xviii. 72. 311.

to impose taxes upon it. Yardely and his council, who seem to have been fit instruments for carrying this system of arbitrary rule into execution, did not fail to put such a construction on the words of their commission as was most favourable to their own jurisdiction. During a great part of Charles's reign, Virginia knew no other law than the will of the sovereign. Statutes were published, and taxes imposed, without once calling the representatives of the people to authorize them by their sanction. At the same time that the colonists were bereaved of political rights which they deemed essential to freemen and citizens, their private property was violently invaded. A proclamation was issued, by which, under pretences equally absurd and frivolous, they were prohibited from selling tobacco to any person but certain commissioners appointed by the king to purchase it on his account;\* and they had the cruel mortification to behold the sovereign, who should have afforded them protection, engross all the profits of their industry, by seizing the only valuable commodity which they had to vend, and retaining the monopoly of it in his own hands. While the staple of the colony in Virginia sunk in value under the oppression and restraints of a monopoly, property in land was rendered insecure by various grants

\* Rymer, xviii. 19.

grants of it, which Charles inconsiderately bestowed upon his favourites. These were not only of such exorbitant extent as to be unfavourable to the progress of cultivation; but from inattention, or imperfect acquaintance with the geography of the country, their boundaries were so inaccurately defined, that large tracts already occupied and planted were often included in them.

The murmurs and complaints which such a system of administration excited, were augmented by the rigour with which Sir John Harvey, who succeeded Yardely in the government of the colony,\* enforced every fact of power. Rapacious, unfeeling, and haughty, he added insolence to oppression, and neither regarded the sentiments, nor listened to the remonstrances of the people under his command. The colonists, far from the seat of government, and overawed by authority derived from a royal commission, submitted long to his tyranny and exactions. Their patience was at last exhausted, and in a transport of popular rage and indignation, they seized their governor, and sent him a prisoner to England, accompanied by two of their number, whom they deputed to prefer their accusations against him

\* Rymer, xviii. 980.

him to the king. But this attempt to redress their own wrongs, by a proceeding so summary and violent as is hardly consistent with any idea of regular government, and can be justified only in cases of such urgent necessity as rarely occur in civil society, was altogether repugnant to every notion which Charles entertained with respect to the obedience due by subjects to their sovereign. To him the conduct of the colonists appeared to be not only an usurpation of his right to judge and to punish one of his own officers, but an open and audacious act of rebellion against his authority. Without deigning to admit their deputies into his presence, or to hear one article of their charge against Harvey, the king instantly sent him back to his former station, with an ample renewal of all the powers belonging to it. But though Charles deemed this vigorous step necessary in order to assert his own authority, and to testify his displeasure with those who had presumed to offer such an insult to it, he seems to have been so sensible of the grievances under which the colonists groaned, and of the chief source from which they flowed, that soon after, he not only removed a governor so justly odious to them, but named as a successor Sir William Berkeley, a person far superior to Harvey in rank and abilities, and still more distinguished by possessing all the popular



popular virtues to which the other was a stranger.\*

Under his government the colony in Virginia remained, with some short intervals of interruption, almost forty years, and to his mild and prudent administration its increase and prosperity is in a great measure to be ascribed. It was indebted, however, to the king himself for such a reform of its constitution and policy, as gave a different aspect to the colony, and animated all its operations with new spirit. Though the tenor of Sir William Berkeley's commission was the same with that of his predecessor, he received instructions under the great seal, by which he was empowered to declare, that in all its concerns, civil as well as ecclesiastical, the colony was to be governed according to the laws of England; he was directed to issue writs for electing representatives of the people, who, in conjunction with the governor and council, were to form a general assembly, and to possess supreme legislative authority in the community; he was ordered to establish courts of justice, in which all questions, whether civil or criminal, were to be decided agreeably to the forms of judicial procedure in the mother country. It is not easy to discover what were the

\* Beverley's Hist. of Virginia, p. 50. Chalmers' Annals, i. 113, &c.



the motives which induced a monarch tenacious in adhering to any opinion or system which he had once adopted, jealous to excess of his own rights, and adverse on every occasion to any extension of the privileges claimed by his people, to relinquish his original plan of administration in the colony, and to grant such immunities to his subjects settled there. From the historians of Virginia, no less superficial than ill-informed, no light can be derived with respect to this point. It is most probable, that dread of the spirit then rising in Great Britain extorted from Charles concessions so favourable to Virginia. After an intermission of almost twelve years, the state of his affairs compelled him to have recourse to the great council of the nation. There his subjects would find a jurisdiction independent of the crown, and able to control its authority. There they hoped for legal redress of all their grievances. As the colonists in Virginia had applied for relief to a former parliament, it might be expected with certainty, that they would lay their case before the first meeting of an assembly, in which they were secure of a favourable audience. Charles knew, that if the spirit of his administration in Virginia were to be tried by the maxims of the English constitution, it must be severely reprehended. He was aware that many measures of greater moment in his government would be brought under

under a strict review in parliament; and unwilling to give mal-contents the advantage of adding a charge of oppression in the remote parts of his dominions to a catalogue of domestic grievances, he artfully endeavoured to take the merit of having granted voluntarily to his people in Virginia such privileges as he foresaw would be extorted from him.

But though Charles established the internal government of Virginia on a model similar to that of the English constitution, and conferred on his subjects there all the rights of freemen and citizens, he was extremely solicitous to maintain its connection with the parent state. With this view he instructed Sir William Berkeley strictly to prohibit any commerce of the colony with foreign nations; and in order more certainly to secure exclusive possession of all the advantages arising from the sale of its productions, he was required to take a bond from the master of each vessel that sailed from Virginia, to land his cargo in some part of the king's dominions in Europe.\* Even under this restraint, such is the kindly influence of free government on society, the colony advanced so rapidly in industry and population, that at the beginning of the civil war, the English settled in it exceeded twenty thousand.†

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Gratitude

\* Chalmers' Annals, p. 219, 232.

† Ibid. p. 125.

Gratitude towards a monarch, from whose hands they had received immunities which they had long wished, but hardly expected to enjoy, the influence and example of a popular governor, passionately devoted to the interests of his master, concurred in preserving inviolated loyalty among the colonists. Even after monarchy was abolished, after one king had been beheaded, and another driven into exile, the authority of the crown continued to be acknowledged (1650) and revered in Virginia. Irritated at this open defiance of its power, the parliament issued an ordinance, declaring, that as the settlement in Virginia had been made at the cost and by the people of England, it ought to be subordinate to and dependant upon the English commonwealth, and subject to such laws and regulations as are or shall be made in parliament; that, instead of this dutiful submission, the colonists had disclaimed the authority of the state, and audaciously rebelled against it; that on this account they were denounced notorious traitors, and not only all vessels belonging to natives of England, but those of foreign nations, were prohibited to enter their ports, or to carry on any commerce with them.

It was not the mode of that age to wage a war of words alone. The efforts of an high spirited government in asserting its own dignity were

were prompt and vigorous. A powerful squadron, with a considerable body of land forces, was dispatched to reduce the Virginians to obedience. After compelling the colonies in Barbadoes and the other islands to submit to the commonwealth, the squadron entered the Bay of Chesapeak (1651). Berkeley, with more courage than prudence, took arms to oppose this formidable armament; but he could not long maintain such an unequal contest. His gallant resistance, however, procured favourable terms to the people under his government. A general indemnity for all past offences was granted; they acknowledged the authority of the commonwealth, and were admitted to a participation of all the rights enjoyed by citizens.\* Berkeley, firm to his principles of loyalty, disdained to make any stipulation for himself; and choosing to pass his days far removed from the seat of a government which he detested, continued to reside in Virginia as a private man, beloved and respected by all over whom he had formerly presided.

Not satisfied with taking measures to subject the colonies, the commonwealth turned its attention towards the most effectual mode of retaining them in dependance on the parent state,

\* Thurlow's State Papers, i. 197. Chalmers' Annals, p. 122. Beverley's Hist. p. 53.



state, and of securing to it the benefit of their increasing commerce. With this view the parliament framed two laws (1651) one of which expressly prohibited all mercantile intercourse between the colonies and foreign states, and the other ordained, that no production of Asia, Africa, or America, should be imported into the dominions of the commonwealth, but in vessels belonging to English owners, or to the people of the colonies settled there, and navigated by an English commander,\* and by crews of which the greater part must be Englishmen. But while the wisdom of the commonwealth prescribed the channel in which the trade of the colonies was to be carried on, it was solicitous to encourage the cultivation of the staple commodity of Virginia by an act of parliament (1652) which gave legal force to all the injunctions of James and Charles against planting tobacco in England.†

Under governors appointed by the commonwealth, or by Cromwell, when he usurped the supreme power, Virginia remained almost nine years in perfect tranquillity. During that period, many adherents to the royal party, and among these some gentlemen of good families, in order to avoid danger and oppression,

\* Scobel's Acts, p. 132. 176.

† Ibid. p. 187.



oppression, to which they were exposed in England, or in hopes of repairing their ruined fortunes, resorted thither. Warmly attached to the cause for which they had fought and suffered, and animated with all the passions natural to men recently engaged in a fierce and long protracted civil war, they, by their intercourse with the colonists, confirmed them in principles of loyalty, and added to their impatience and indignation under the restraints imposed on their commerce by their new masters. On the death of Mathews, the last governor named by Cromwell, the sentiments and inclination of the people, no longer under the control of authority, burst out with violence. They forced Sir William Berkeley to quit his retirement; they unanimously elected him governor of the colony; and as he refused to act under an usurped authority, they boldly erected the royal standard, and, acknowledging Charles II. to be their lawful sovereign, proclaimed him with all his titles; and the Virginians long boasted, that as they were the last of the king's subjects who renounced their allegiance, they were the first who returned to their duty.\*

Happily for the people of Virginia, a revolution in England, no less sudden and unexpected,

\* Beverley, p. 55. Chalmers, p. 124.

pected, seated Charles on the throne of his ancestors, and saved them from the severe chastisement, to which their premature declaration in his favour must have exposed them. On receiving the first account of this event, the joy and exultation of the colony were universal and unbounded. These, however, were not of long continuance. Gracious, but unproductive professions of esteem and good-will were the only return made by Charles to loyalty and services, which in their own estimation were so distinguished that no recompence was beyond what they might claim. If the king's neglect and ingratitude disappointed all the sanguine hopes which their vanity had founded on the merit of their past conduct, the spirit which influenced parliament in its commercial deliberations, opened a prospect that alarmed them with respect to their future situation. In framing regulations for the encouragement of trade, which, during the convulsions of civil war, and amidst continual fluctuations in government, had met with such obstruction that it declined in every quarter; the House of Commons, instead of granting the colonies that relief which they expected from the restraints in their commerce imposed by the commonwealth and Cromwell, not only adopted all their ideas concerning this branch of legislation, but extended them farther. This produced the *act of navigation*,  
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the most important and memorable of any in the statute book with respect to the history of English commerce. By it, besides several momentous articles foreign to the subject of this work, it was enacted, that no commodities should be imported into any settlement in Asia, Africa, or America, or exported from them, but in vessels of English or plantation built, whereof the master and three-fourths of the mariners shall be English subjects, under pain of forfeiting ship and goods; that none but natural born subjects, or such as have been naturalized, shall exercise the occupation of merchant or factor in any English settlement, under pain of forfeiting their goods and chattels; that no sugar, tobacco, cotton, wool, indigo, ginger, or woods used in dying, of the growth or manufacture of the colonies, shall be shipped from them to any other country but England; and in order to secure the performance of this, a sufficient bond, with one surety, shall be given, before sailing, by the owners, for a specific sum proportional to the rate of the vessel employed by them.\* The productions subjected to this restriction are distinguished, in the language of commerce and finance, by the name of *enumerated commodities*; and as industry in its progress furnished new articles of value, these have been successively added to  
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\* 12 Car. II. c. 18.

the roll, and subjected to the same restraint. Soon after (1663) the act of navigation was extended, and additional restraints were imposed, by a new law, which prohibited the importation of any European commodity into the colonies, but what was laden in England in vessels navigated and manned as the act of navigation required. More effectual provision was made by this law for exacting the penalties to which the transgressors of the act of navigation were subjected; and the principles of policy, on which the various regulations contained in both statutes are founded, were openly avowed in a declaration, that as the plantations beyond seas are inhabited and peopled by subjects of England, they may be kept in a firmer dependance upon it, and rendered yet more beneficial and advantageous unto it, in the further employment and increase of English shipping and seamen, as well as in the vent of English woollen and other manufactures and commodities; and in making England a staple, not only of the commodities of those plantations, but also of the commodities of other countries and places, for the supplying of them; and it being the usage of other nations to keep the trade of their plantations to themselves.\* In prosecution of those favourite maxims, the English legislature proceeded a step farther.

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\* 15 Car. II. c. 7.



As the act of navigation had left the people of the colonies at liberty to export the enumerated commodities from one plantation to another without paying any duty (1672) it subjected them to a tax equivalent to what was paid by the consumers of these commodities in England.\*

By these successive regulations, the plan of securing to England a monopoly of the commerce with its colonies, and of shutting up every other channel into which it might be diverted, was perfected and reduced into complete system. On one side of the Atlantic, these regulations have been extolled as an extraordinary effort of political sagacity, and have been considered as the great charter of national commerce, to which the present state is indebted for all its opulence and power. On the other, they have been execrated as a code of oppression, more suited to the illiberality of mercantile ideas, than to extensive views of legislative wisdom. Which of these opinions is best founded, I shall examine at large in another part of this work. But in writing the history of the English settlements in America, it was necessary to trace the progress of those restraining laws with accuracy, as in every subsequent transaction we may observe a  
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\* 25 Car. II. c. 7.



perpetual exertion, on the part of the mother-country, to enforce and extend them; and on the part of the colonies, endeavours no less unremitting, to elude or to obstruct their operation.

Hardly was the act of navigation known in Virginia, and its effects begun to be felt, when the colony remonstrated against it as a grievance, and petitioned earnestly for relief. But the commercial ideas of Charles and his ministers coincided so perfectly with those of parliament, that, instead of listening with a favourable ear to their applications, they laboured assiduously to carry the act into strict execution. For this purpose, instructions were issued to the governor, forts were built on the banks of the principal rivers, and small vessels appointed to cruize on the coast. The Virginians, seeing no prospect of obtaining exemption from the act, set themselves to evade it, and found means, notwithstanding the vigilance with which they were watched, of carrying on a considerable clandestine trade with foreigners, particularly with the Dutch settled on Hudson's River. Emboldened by observing disaffection spread through the colony, some veteran soldiers who had served under Cromwell, and had been banished to Virginia, (1663) formed a design of rendering themselves masters of the country, and of asserting its independence

pendence on England. This rash project was discovered by one of their associates, and disconcerted by the vigorous exertions of Sir William Berkeley. But the spirit of discontent, though repressed was not extinguished. Every day something occurred to revive and to nourish it. As it is with extreme difficulty that commerce can be turned into a new channel, tobacco, the staple of the colony, sunk prodigiously in value, when they were compelled to send it all to one market. It was some time before England could furnish them regularly full assortments of those necessary articles, without which the industry of the colony could not be carried on, or its prosperity secured. Encouraged by the symptoms of general languor and despondency, which this declining state of the colony occasioned, the Indians seated towards the heads of the rivers ventured first to attack the remote settlements, and then to make incursions into the interior parts of the country. Unexpected as these hostilities were, from a people who during a long period had lived in friendship with the English, a measure taken by the king seems to have excited still greater terror among the most opulent people in the colony. Charles had imprudently imitated the example of his father, by granting such large tracts of land in Virginia to several of his courtiers, as tended to unsettle the distribution of property in the country,

country, and to render the title of the most ancient planters to their estates precarious and questionable (1676). From those various causes, which in a greater or lesser degree affected every individual in the colony, the indignation of the people became general, and was worked up to such a pitch, that nothing was wanting to precipitate them into the most desperate acts, but some leader, qualified to unite and to direct their operations.\*

Such a leader they found in Nathaniel Bacon, a colonel of militia, who, though he had been settled in Virginia only three years, had acquired, by popular manners, an insinuating address, and the consideration derived from having been regularly trained in England to the profession of law, such general esteem, that he had been admitted into the council, and was regarded as one of the most respectable persons in the colony. Bacon was ambitious, eloquent, daring, and prompted either by honest zeal to redress the public wrongs, or allured by hopes of raising himself to distinction and power, he mingled with the mal-contented, and by his bold harangues and confident promises of removing all their grievances, he inflamed them almost to madness. As the devastations committed by the Indians was the calamity

\* Chalmers' Annals, ch. 10. 13, 14. passim. Beverley, p. 58, &c.

calamity most sensibly felt by the people, he accused the governor of having neglected the proper measures for repelling the invasions of the savages, and exhorted them to take arms in their own defence, and to exterminate that odious race. Great numbers assembled, and chose Bacon to be their general. He applied to the governor for a commission, confirming this election of the people, and offered to march instantly against the common enemy. Berkeley, accustomed by long possession of supreme command to high ideas of the respect due to his station, considered this tumultuary armament as an open insult to his authority, and suspected that, under specious appearances, Bacon concealed most dangerous designs. Unwilling, however, to give farther provocation to an incensed multitude, by a direct refusal of what they demanded, he thought it prudent to negotiate, in order to gain time; and it was not until he found all endeavours to soothe them ineffectual, that he issued a proclamation, requiring them, in the king's name, under the pain of being denounced rebels, to disperse.

But Bacon, sensible that he had now advanced so far as rendered it impossible to recede with honour or safety, instantly took the only resolution that remained in his situation. At the head of a chosen body of his followers he



he marched rapidly to James-Town, and surrounding the house where the governor and council were assembled, demanded the commission for which he had formerly applied. Berkeley, with the proud indignant spirit of a cavalier, disdaining the requisitions of a rebel, peremptorily refused to comply, and calmly presented his naked breast to the weapons which were pointed against it. The council, however, foreseeing the fatal consequences of driving an enraged multitude, in whose power they were, to the last extremities of violence, prepared a commission, constituting Bacon general of all the forces in Virginia, and by their entreaties prevailed on the governor to sign it. Bacon with his troops retired in triumph. Hardly was the council delivered by his departure from the dread of present danger, when, by a transition not unusual in feeble minds, presumptuous boldness succeeded to excessive fear. The commission granted to Bacon was declared to be null, having been extorted by force; he was proclaimed a rebel, his followers were required to abandon his standard, and the militia ordered to arm and to join the governor.

Enraged at conduct which he branded with the name of base and treacherous, Bacon, instead of continuing his march towards the Indian country, instantly wheeled about, and advanced



vanced with all his forces to James-Town. The governor, unable to resist such a numerous body, made his escape, and fled across the bay to Acomack on the Eastern shore. Some of the counsellors accompanied him thither, others retired to their own plantations. Upon the flight of Sir William Berkeley, and dispersion of the council, the frame of civil government in the colony seemed to be dissolved, and Bacon became possessed of supreme and uncontrolled power. But as he was sensible that his countrymen would not long submit with patience to authority acquired and held merely by force of arms, he endeavoured to found it on a more constitutional basis, by obtaining the sanction of the people's approbation. With this view he called together the most considerable gentlemen in the colony, and having prevailed on them to bind themselves by oath to maintain his authority, and to resist every enemy that should oppose it, he from that time considered his jurisdiction as legally established.

Berkeley, meanwhile, having collected some forces, made inroads into different parts of the colony, where Bacon's authority was recognized. Several sharp conflicts happened with various success. James-Town was reduced to ashes, and the best cultivated districts in the province were laid waste, sometimes by one party,

party, and sometimes by the other. But it was not by his own exertions that the governor hoped to terminate the contest. He had early transmitted an account of the transactions in Virginia to the king, and demanded such a body of soldiers as would enable him to quell the insurgents, whom he represented as so exasperated by the restraints imposed on their trade, that they were impatient to shake of all dependance on the parent state. Charles, alarmed at a commotion no less dangerous than unexpected, and solicitous to maintain his authority over a colony, the value of which was daily increasing, and more fully understood, speedily dispatched a small squadron, with such a number of regular troops as Berkeley had required. Bacon and his followers received information of this armament, but were not intimidated at its approach. They boldly determined to oppose it with open force, and declared it to be consistent with their duty and allegiance, to treat all who should aid Sir William Berkeley as enemies, until they should have an opportunity of laying their grievances before their sovereign.\*

But while both parties prepared, (1677) with equal animosity, to involve their country in the horrors of civil war, an event happened, which

\* Beverley's Hist. p. 75, 76.

which quieted the commotion almost as suddenly as it had been excited. Bacon, when ready to take the field, sickened and died. None of his followers possessed such talents, or were so much objects of the people's confidence, as entitled them to aspire to the supreme command. Destitute of a leader to conduct and animate them, their sanguine hopes of success subsided; mutual distrust accompanied this universal despondency; all began to wish for an accommodation; and after a short negotiation with Sir William Berkeley, they laid down their arms, and submitted to his government, on obtaining a promise of general pardon.

Thus terminated an insurrection, which, in the annals of Virginia, is distinguished by the name of *Bacon's rebellion*. During seven months this daring leader was master of the colony, while the royal governor was shut up in a remote and ill-peopled corner of it. What were the real motives that prompted him to take arms, and to what length he intended to carry his plans of reformation, either in commerce or government, it is not easy to discover, in the scanty materials from which we derive our information with respect to this transaction. It is probable, that his conduct, like that of other adventurers in faction, would have been regulated chiefly by events; and accordingly as these proved favourable or adverse, his views and

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requisitions would have been extended or circumscribed.

Sir William Berkeley, as soon as he was re-instated in his office, called together the representatives of the people, that by their advice and authority public tranquillity and order might be perfectly established. Though this assembly met a few weeks after the death of Bacon, while the memory of reciprocal injuries was still recent, and when the passions excited by such a fierce contest had but little time to subside, its proceedings were conducted with a moderation seldom exercised by the successful party in a civil war. No man suffered capitally; a small number were subjected to fines; others were declared incapable of holding any office of trust; and with those exceptions, the promise of general indemnity was confirmed by law. Soon after, Berkeley was recalled, and Colonel Jefferys was appointed his successor.

From that period, to the Revolution in 1688, there is scarcely any memorable occurrence in the history of Virginia. A peace was concluded with the Indians. Under several successive governors, administration was carried on in the colony with the same arbitrary spirit that distinguished the latter years of Charles II. and the precipitate counsels of  
James



James II. The Virginians, with a constitution which, in form, resembled that of England, enjoyed hardly any portion of the liberty which that admirable system of policy is framed to secure. They were deprived even of the last consolation of the oppressed, the power of complaining, by a law which, under severe penalties, prohibited them from speaking disrespectfully of the governor, or defaming, either by words or writing, the administration of the colony.\* Still, however, the laws restraining their commerce were felt as an intolerable grievance, and nourished in secret a spirit of discontent, which, from the necessity of concealing it, acquired a greater degree of acrimony. But notwithstanding those unfavourable circumstances, the colony continued to increase. The use of tobacco was now become general in Europe; and though it had fallen considerably in price, the extent of demand compensated that diminution, and by giving constant employment to the industry of the planters diffused wealth among them. At the Revolution the number of inhabitants in the colony exceeded sixty thousand,† and in the course of twenty-eight years its population had been more than doubled.§

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\* Beverley, p. 81. Chalmers, p. 341.

† Chalmers' Annals, p. 356. § Ibid. p. 125.





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## THE HISTORY OF

## A M E R I C A.

### BOOK X.

**W**HEN James I. in the year one thousand six-hundred and six, made that magnificent partition, which has been mentioned, of a vast region in North America, extending from the thirty-fourth to the forty-fifth degree of latitude, between two trading companies of his subjects, he established the residence of the one in London, and of the other in Plymouth. The former was authorized to settle in the southern, and the latter in the northern part of this territory, then distinguished by the general name of Virginia. This arrangement seems to have been formed upon the idea of some speculative refiner, who  
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aimed at diffusing the spirit of industry, by fixing the seat of one branch of the trade that was now to be opened, on the east coast of the island, and the other on the west. But London possesses such advantages of situation, that the commercial wealth and activity of England have always centered in the capital. At the beginning of the last century, the superiority of the metropolis in both these respects was so great, that though the powers and privileges conferred by the king on the two trading companies were precisely the same, the adventurers settled in Plymouth fell far short of those in London; in the vigour and success of their efforts towards accomplishing the purpose of their institution. Though the operations of the Plymouth company were animated by the public-spirited zeal of Sir John Popham, chief justice of England, Sir Ferdinando Gorges, and some other gentlemen of the west, all its exertions were feeble and unfortunate.

The first vessel fitted out by the company (1606) was taken by the Spaniards. In the year one thousand six hundred and seven, a feeble settlement was made at Sagahadoc; but, on account of the rigour of the climate, was soon relinquished, and for some time nothing farther was attempted than a few fishing voyages to Cape Cod, or a pitiful traffic with the  
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natives for skins and oil. One of the vessels equipped for this purpose was commanded by Captain Smith, whose name has been so often mentioned with distinction in the history of Virginia. The adventure was prosperous and lucrative (1614.) But his ardent enterprising mind could not confine its attention to objects so unequal to it as the petty details of a trading voyage. He employed a part of his time in exploring the coast, and in delineating its bays and harbours. On his return, he laid a map of it before Prince Charles, and, with the usual exaggeration of discoverers, painted the beauty and excellence of the country in such glowing colours, that the young Prince, in the warmth of admiration, declared, that it should be called New England;\* a name which effaced that of Virginia, and by which it is still distinguished.

The favourable accounts of the country by Smith, as well as the success of his voyage, seem to have encouraged private adventurers to prosecute the trade on the coast of New England with greater briskness; but did not inspire the languishing company of Plymouth with such vigour, as to make any new attempt towards establishing a permanent colony there. Something more than the prospect of distant gain

\* Smith's Travels, Book vi. p. 203, &c. Purchas, iv. p. 1837.

gain to themselves, or of future advantages to their country, was requisite, in order to induce men to abandon the place of their nativity, to migrate to another quarter of the globe, and endure innumerable hardships under an untried climate, and in an uncultivated land, covered with woods, or occupied by fierce and hostile tribes of savages. But what mere attention to private emolument or to national utility could not effect, was accomplished by the operation of an higher principle. Religion had gradually excited among a great body of the people, a spirit that fitted them remarkably for encountering the dangers, and surmounting the obstacles, which had hitherto rendered abortive the schemes of colonization in that part of America allotted to the company of Plymouth. As the various settlements in New England are indebted for their origin to this spirit, as in the course of our narrative we shall discern its influence mingling in all their transactions, and giving a peculiar tincture to the character of the people, as well as to their institutions, both civil and ecclesiastical, it becomes necessary to trace its rise and progress with attention and accuracy.

When the superstitions and corruptions of the Romish church prompted different nations of Europe to throw off its yoke, and to withdraw from its communion, the mode as well



as degree of their separation was various. Wherever reformation was sudden, and carried on by the people without authority from their rulers, or in opposition to it, the rupture was violent and total. Every part of the ancient fabric was overturned, and a different system, not only with respect to doctrine, but to church government, and the external rites of worship, was established. Calvin, who, by his abilities, learning, and austerity of manners, had acquired high reputation and authority in the Protestant churches, was a zealous advocate for this plan of thorough reformation. He exhibited a model of that pure form of ecclesiastical policy, which he approved in the constitution of the church of Geneva. The simplicity of its institutions, and still more their repugnancy to those of the Popish church, were so much admired by all the stricter reformers, that it was copied, with some small variations, in Scotland, in the Republic of the United Provinces, in the dominions of the House of Brandenburg, in those of the Elector Palatine, and in the churches of the Hugonots in France.

But in those countries where the steps of departure from the church of Rome were taken with greater deliberation, and regulated by the wisdom or policy of the supreme magistrate, the separation was not so wide. Of all

the reformed churches, that of England has deviated least from the ancient institutions. The violent but capricious spirit of Henry VIII. who, though he disclaimed the supremacy, revered the tenets of the Papal see, checked innovations in doctrine or worship during his reign. When his son ascended the throne, and the Protestant religion was established by law, the cautious prudence of Archbishop Cranmer moderated the zeal of those who had espoused the new opinions. Though the articles to be recognized as the system of national faith, were framed conformably to the doctrines of Calvin, his notions with respect to church government and the mode of worship were not adopted. As the hierarchy in England was incorporated with the civil policy of the kingdom, and constituted a member of the legislature, archbishops and bishops, with all the subordinate ranks of ecclesiastics subject to them, were continued according to ancient form, and with the same dignity and jurisdiction. The peculiar vestments in which the clergy performed their sacred functions, bowing at the name of Jesus, kneeling at receiving the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, the sign of the Cross in baptism, the use of the Ring in marriage, with several other rites to which long usage had accustomed the people, and which time had rendered venerable, were still retained. But though Parliament enjoined the observance

observance of these ceremonies under very severe penalties,\* several of the more zealous clergy entertained scruples with respect to the lawfulness of complying with this injunction; and the vigilance and authority of Cranmer and Ridley, with difficulty, saved their infant church from the disgrace of a schism on this account.

On the accession of Mary, the furious zeal with which she persecuted all who had adopted the tenets of the Reformers forced many eminent Protestants, laymen as well as ecclesiastics, to seek an asylum on the continent. Francfort, Geneva, Basil, and Strasburgh, received them with affectionate hospitality as sufferers in the cause of truth, and the magistrates permitted them to assemble by themselves for religious worship. The exiles who took up their residence in the two former cities modelled their little congregations according to the ideas of Calvin, and, with a spirit natural to men in their situation, eagerly adopted institutions which appeared to be farther removed from the superstitions of Popery than those of their own church. They returned to England as soon as Elizabeth re-established the Protestant religion, not only with more violent antipathy to the opinions and practices of that church  
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\* 2 and 3 Edw. VI. c. 1.

by which they had been oppressed, but with a strong attachment to that mode of worship to which they had been for some years accustomed. As they were received by their countrymen with the veneration due to confessors, they exerted all the influence derived from that opinion, in order to obtain such a reformation in the English ritual, as might bring it nearer to the standard of purity in foreign churches. Some of the queen's most confidential ministers were warmly disposed to co-operate with them in this measure. But Elizabeth paid little regard to the inclinations of the one, or the sentiments of the other. Fond of pomp and ceremony, accustomed according to the mode of that age, to study religious controversy, and possessing, like her father, such confidence in her own understanding, that she never doubted her capacity to judge and decide with respect to every point in dispute between contending sects,\* she chose to act according to her own ideas,

\* Of the high idea which Elizabeth entertained with respect to her own superior skill in theology, as well as the haughty tone in which she dictated to her subjects what they ought to believe, we have a striking picture in her speech at the close of the parliament, A. D. 1585.—“One thing I may not overlook. Religion, the ground on which all other matters ought to take root, and being corrupted, may mar all the tree. And that there be some fault-finders with the order of the clergy, which so may make a slander to myself, and to the church, whose over-ruler God hath made me, whose negligence cannot be excused, if any schisms or errors heretical were suffered. Thus much, I must say, that some faults and negligences must grow and be, as in all other great charges it happeneth; and what vocation without? All which, if you my lords



ideas, which led her rather to approach nearer to the church of Rome, in the parade of external worship, than to widen the breach by abolishing any rite already established.\* An act of parliament, in the first year of her reign, not only required an exact conformity to the mode of worship prescribed in the service book, under most rigorous penalties, but empowered the Queen to enjoin the observance of such additional ceremonies as might tend, in her opinion, to render the public exercises of devotion more decent and edifying.†

The advocates for a farther reformation, notwithstanding this cruel disappointment of the sanguine hopes with which they returned to their native country, did not relinquish their design. They disseminated their opinions with great industry among the people. They extolled the purity of foreign churches, and inveighed against the superstitious practices with  
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lords of the clergy do not amend, I mean to depose you. Look ye, therefore, well to your charges. This may be amended without needless or open exclamations. I am supposed to have many studies, but most philosophical. I must yield this to be true, that I suppose few (that be not professors) have read more. And I need not tell you, that I am not so simple that I understand not, nor so forgetful that I remember not; and yet, amidst my many volumes, I hope God's book hath not been my seldomest lectures, in which we find that which by reason all ought to believe. I see many overbold with God Almighty, making too many subtle scannings of his blessed will. The presumption is so great that I may not suffer it," &c. D'Ewes's Journal, p. 328.

\* Neal's Hist. of the Puritans, i. 138. 176.

† 1 Eliz. c. 2.



which religion was defiled in their own church. In vain did the defenders of the established system represent that these forms and ceremonies were, in themselves, things perfectly indifferent, which, from long usage, were viewed with reverence; and, by their impression upon the senses and imagination, tended not only to fix the attention, but to affect the heart, and to warm it with devout and worthy sentiments. The Puritans (for by that name such as scrupled to comply with what was enjoined by the act of uniformity were distinguished) maintained, that the rites in question were inventions of men, superadded to the simple and reasonable service required in the word of God; that from the excessive solicitude with which conformity to them was exacted, the multitude must conceive such an high opinion of their value and importance, as might induce them to rest satisfied with the mere form and shadow of religion, and to imagine that external observances may compensate for the want of inward sanctity; that ceremonies which had been long employed by a society manifestly corrupt, to veil its own defects, and to seduce and fascinate mankind, ought now to be rejected as relics of superstition unworthy of a place in a church which gloried in the name of *Reformed*.

The people, to whom in every religious controversy the final appeal is made, listened to

to the arguments of the contending parties; and it is obvious to which of them, men who had lately beheld the superstitious spirit of Popery, and felt its persecuting rage, would lend the most favourable ear. The desire of a farther separation from the church of Rome spread wide through the nation. The preachers who contended for this, and who refused to wear the surplice, and other vestments peculiar to their order, or to observe the ceremonies enjoined by law, were followed and admired, while the ministry of the zealous advocates for conformity was deserted, and their persons often exposed to insult. For some time the non-conformists were connived at; but as their number and boldness increased, the interposition both of spiritual and civil authority was deemed necessary in order to check their progress. To the disgrace of Christians, the sacred rights of conscience and private judgment, as well as the charity and mutual forbearance suitable to the mild spirit of the religion which they professed, were in that age little understood. Not only the idea of toleration, but even the word itself in the sense now affixed to it, was then unknown. Every church claimed a right to employ the hand of power for the protection of truth and the extirpation of error. The laws of her kingdom armed Elizabeth with ample authority for this purpose, and she was abundantly disposed to  
exercise

exercise it with full vigour. Many of the most eminent among the Puritan clergy were deprived of their benefices, others were imprisoned, several were fined, and some put to death. But persecution, as usually happens, instead of extinguishing, inflamed their zeal to such a height, that the jurisdiction of the ordinary courts of law was deemed insufficient to suppress it, and a new tribunal was established under the title of the *high commission for ecclesiastical affairs*, whose powers and mode of procedure were hardly less odious or less hostile to the principles of justice, than those of the Spanish inquisition. Several attempts were made in the House of Commons to check these arbitrary proceedings, and to moderate the rage of persecution; but the Queen always imposed silence upon those who presumed to deliver any opinion with respect to a matter appertaining solely to her prerogative, in a tone as imperious and arrogant as was ever used by Henry VIII. in addressing his Parliaments; and so tamely obsequious were the guardians of the people's rights, that they not only obeyed those unconstitutional commands, but consented to an act, by which every person who should absent himself from church during a month was subjected to punishment by fine and imprisonment; and if after conviction he did not, within three months, renounce his erroneous opinions, and conform to the

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the laws, he was then obliged to abjure the realm; but if he either refused to comply with this condition, or returned from banishment, he should be put to death as a felon without benefit of clergy.\*

By this iniquitous statute, equally repugnant to ideas of civil and of religious liberty, the Puritans were cut off from any hope of obtaining either reformation in the church or indulgence to themselves. Exasperated by this rigorous treatment, their antipathy to the established religion increased, and, with the progress natural to violent passions, carried them far beyond what was their original aim. The first Puritans did not entertain any scruples with respect to the lawfulness of Episcopal government, and seem to have been very unwilling to withdraw from communion with the church of which they were members. But when they were thrown out of her bosom, and constrained to hold separate assemblies for the worship of God, their followers no longer viewed a society by which they were oppressed with reverence or affection. Her government, her discipline, her ritual, were examined with minute attention. Every error was pointed out, and every defect magnified. The more boldly any teacher inveighed against the corruptions of the church, he was listened to with greater approbation; and the farther he

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\* 35 Eliz. c. 1.



urged his disciples to depart from such an impure community, the more eagerly did they follow him. By degrees, ideas of ecclesiastical policy, altogether repugnant to those of the established church, gained footing in the nation. The more sober and learned Puritans inclined to that form which is known by the name of Presbyterian. Such as were more thoroughly possessed with the spirit of innovation, however much they might approve the equality of pastors which that system establishes, reprobated the authority which it vests in various judicatories, descending from one to another in regular subordination, as inconsistent with Christian liberty.

These wild notions floated for some time in the minds of the people, and amused them with many ideal schemes of ecclesiastical policy. At length Robert Brown, (1580) a popular declaimer in high estimation, reduced them to a system, on which he modelled his own congregation. He taught, that the church of England was corrupt and antichristian, its ministers not lawfully ordained, its ordinances and sacraments invalid; and therefore he prohibited his people to hold communion with it in any religious function. He maintained, that a society of Christians, uniting together to worship God, constituted a church, possessed of complete jurisdiction in the conduct of its  
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own affairs, independent of any other society, and unaccountable to any superior ; that the priesthood was neither a distinct order in the church, nor conferred an indelible character ; but that every man qualified to teach might be set apart for that office by the election of the brethren, and by imposition of their hands ; in like manner, by their authority, he might be discharged from that function, and reduced to the rank of a private Christian ; that every person when admitted a member of a church ought to make a public confession of his faith, and give evidence of his being in a state of favour with God ; and that all the affairs of a church were to be regulated by the decision of the majority of its members.

This democratical form of government, which abolished all distinction of ranks in the church, and conferred an equal portion of power on every individual, accorded so perfectly with the levelling genius of fanaticism, that it was fondly adopted by many as a complete model of Christian policy. From their founder, they were denominated Brownists ; and as their tenets were more hostile to the established religion than those of other separatists, the fiercest storm of persecution fell upon their heads. Many of them were fined or imprisoned, and some put to death ; and though Brown, with a levity of which there are few examples

examples among enthusiasts whose vanity has been soothed by being recognized as heads of a party, abandoned his disciples, conformed to the established religion, and accepted of a benefice in the church, the sect not only subsisted, but continued to spread, especially among persons in the middle and lower ranks of life. But as all their motions were carefully watched, both by the ecclesiastical and civil courts, which, as often as they were detected, punished them with the utmost rigour, a body of them, weary of living in a state of continual danger and alarm, fled to Holland, and settled in Leyden, under the care of Mr. John Robinson, their pastor. There they resided for several years unmolested and obscure. But many of their aged members dying, and some of the younger marrying into Dutch families, while their church received no increase, either by recruits from England, or by proselytes gained in the country, they began to be afraid, that all their high attainments in spiritual knowledge would be lost, and that perfect fabric of policy, which they had erected, would be dissolved and consigned to oblivion, if they remained longer in a strange land.

Deeply affected with the prospect of an event, which to them appeared fatal to the interests of truth, they thought themselves called,  
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in order to prevent it, to remove to some other place, where they might profess and propagate their opinions with greater success. America, in which their countrymen were at that time intent on planting colonies, presented itself to their thoughts. They flattered themselves with hopes of being permitted, in that remote region, to follow their own ideas in religion without disturbance. The dangers and hardships to which all former emigrants to America had been exposed, did not deter them. "They were well weaned, (according to their own description) from the delicate milk of their mother country, and enured to the difficulties of a strange land. They were knit together in a strict and sacred band, by virtue of which they held themselves obliged to take care of the good of each other, and of the whole. It was not with them, as with other men, whom small things could discourage, or small discontents cause to wish themselves at home again."\* The first object of their solicitude (1618) was to secure the free exercise of their religion. For this purpose they applied to the king; and though James refused to give them any explicit assurance of toleration, they seem to have obtained from him some promise of his connivance, as long as they continued to demean themselves quietly.

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\* Hutchinson's Hist. of Massach. p. 4.

So eager were they to accomplish their favourite scheme, that, relying on this precarious security, they began to negotiate with the Virginian company for a tract of land within the limits of their patent. This they easily procured from a society desirous of encouraging migration to a vast country, of which they had hitherto occupied only a few spots.

After the utmost efforts, their preparations fell far short of what was requisite for beginning the settlement of a new colony. A hundred and twenty persons sailed (1620, Sept. 6.) from England in a single ship on this arduous undertaking. The place of their destination was Hudson's River, where they intended to settle; but their captain having been bribed, as is said, by the Dutch, who had then formed a scheme which they afterwards accomplished, of planting a colony there, carried them so far towards the north, that the first land in America which they made was Cape-Cod. They were now, (Nov. 11) not only beyond the precincts of the territory which had been granted to them, but beyond those of the company from which they derived their right. The season, however, was so far advanced, and sickness raged so violently among men unaccustomed to the hardships of a long voyage, that it became necessary to take up their abode there. After exploring the coast,  
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they chose for their station, a place now belonging to the province of Massachusetts Bay, to which they gave the name of New Plymouth, probably out of respect to that company, within whose jurisdiction they now found themselves situated.\*

No season could be more unfavourable to settlement than that in which the colony landed. The winter, which, from the predominance of cold in America, is rigorous to a degree unknown in parallel latitudes of our hemisphere, was already set in; and they were slenderly provided with what was requisite for comfortable subsistence, under a climate considerably more severe than that for which they had made preparation. Above one half of them was cut off before the return of spring, by diseases, or by famine; the survivors, instead of having leisure to attend to the supply of their own wants, were compelled to take arms against the savages in their neighbourhood. Happily for the English, a pestilence, which raged in America the year before they landed, had swept off so great a number of the natives, that they were quickly repulsed and humbled. The privilege of professing their own opinions, and of being governed by laws of their own framing, afforded consolation to the colonists amidst

\* Hubbard's *Pref. State*, p. 3. Cotton's *Magnalia*, p. 7. Hutchinson's *Hist.* p. 3, &c.



amidst all their dangers and hardships. The constitution of their church was the same with that which they had established in Holland. Their system of civil government was founded on those ideas of the natural equality among men, to which their ecclesiastical policy had accustomed them. Every free man, who was a member of the church, was admitted into the supreme legislative body. The laws of England were adopted as the basis of their jurisprudence, though with some diversity in the punishments inflicted upon crimes, borrowed from the Mosaic institutions. The executive power was vested in a governor and some assistants, who were elected annually by the members of the legislative assembly.\* So far their institutions appear to be founded on the ordinary maxims of human prudence. But it was a favourite opinion with all the enthusiasts of that age, that the scriptures contained a complete system, not only of spiritual instruction, but of civil wisdom and polity; and without attending to the peculiar circumstances or situation of the people whose history is there recorded, they often deduced general rules for their own conduct, from what happened among men in a very different state. Under the influence of this wild notion, the colonists of New Plymouth, in imitation of the primitive Christians,

\* Chalmers' Annals, p. 87.

tians, threw all their property into a common stock, and, like members of one family, carried on every work of industry by their joint labour for public behoof.\* But, however this resolution might evidence the sincerity of their faith, it retarded the progress of their colony. The same fatal effects flowed from this community of goods, and of labour, which had formerly been experienced in Virginia; and it soon became necessary to relinquish what was too refined to be capable of being accommodated to the affairs of men. But though they built a small town, and surrounded it with such a fence as afforded sufficient security against the assaults of Indians, the soil around it was so poor, their religious principles were so unsocial, and the supply sent them by their friends so scanty, that at the end of ten years, the number of people belonging to the settlement did not exceed three hundred.† During some years they appear not to have acquired right by any legal conveyance to the territory which they had occupied. At length (1630) they obtained a grant of property from the council of the New Plymouth company, but were never incorporated as a body politic by royal charter.§ Unlike all the other settlements in America, this colony must be considered merely as a voluntary association, held together by the tacit

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\* Chalmers' Annals, p. 89. Douglas's Summary, i. p. 370.

† Ibid. p. 97. § Ibid. p. 97. 107.

consent of its members to recognize the authority of laws, and submit to the jurisdiction of magistrates framed and chosen by themselves. In this state it remained an independent, but feeble community, until it was united to its more powerful neighbour, the colony of Massachusetts Bay, the origin and progress of which I now proceed to relate.

The original company of Plymouth having done nothing effectual towards establishing any permanent settlement in America, James I. in the year one thousand six hundred and twenty, issued a new charter to the Duke of Lenox, the Marquis of Buckingham, and several other persons of distinction in his court, by which he conveyed to them a right to a territory in America, still more extensive than what had been granted to the former patentees, incorporating them as a body politic, in order to plant colonies there, with powers and jurisdiction similar to those contained in his charters to the companies of South and North Virginia. This society was distinguished by the name of the Grand Council of Plymouth for planting and governing New England. What considerations of public utility could induce the king to commit such an undertaking to persons apparently so ill qualified for conducting it, or what prospect of private advantage prompted them to engage in it, the information we receive

ceive from contemporary writers does not enable us to determine. Certain it is, that the expectations of both were disappointed, and after many schemes and arrangements, all the attempts of the new associates towards colonization proved unsuccessful.

New England must have remained unoccupied, if the same causes which occasioned the emigration of the Brownists had not continued to operate. Notwithstanding the violent persecution to which Puritans of every denomination were still exposed, their number and zeal daily increased. As they now despaired of obtaining in their own country any relaxation of the penal statutes enacted against their sect, many began to turn their eyes towards some other place of retreat, where they might profess their own opinions with impunity. From the tranquillity which their brethren had hitherto enjoyed in New Plymouth, they hoped to find this desired asylum in New England; and by the activity of Mr. White, a non-conformist minister at Dorchester, an association was formed by several gentlemen who had imbibed Puritanical notions, in order to conduct a colony thither. They purchased from the council of Plymouth all the territory, extending in length from three miles north of the River Merrimack, to three miles south of Charles River, and in breadth from the Atlantic



lantic to the Southern Ocean (1627, March 19). Zealous as these proprietors were to accomplish their favourite purpose, they quickly perceived their own inability to attempt the population of such an immense region, and deemed it necessary to call in the aid of more opulent co-partners.\*

Of these they found, without difficulty, a sufficient number, chiefly in the capital, and among persons in the commercial and other industrious walks of life, who had openly joined the sect of the Puritans, or secretly favoured their opinions. These new adventurers, with the caution natural to men conversant in business, entertained doubts concerning the propriety of founding a colony on the basis of a grant from a private company of patentees, who might convey a right of property in the soil, but could not confer jurisdiction, or the privilege of governing that society which they had in contemplation to establish. As it was only from royal authority that such powers could be derived, they applied for these; and Charles granted their request, with a facility which appears astonishing, when we consider the principles and views of the men who were suitors for the favour.

Time

\* Neal's Hist. of New England, i. p. 122.



Time has been considered as the parent of political wisdom, but its instructions are communicated slowly. Although the experience of above twenty years might have taught the English the impropriety of committing the government of settlements in America, to exclusive corporations resident in Europe, neither the king nor his subjects had profited so much by what passed before their eyes, as to have extended their ideas beyond those adopted by James, in his first attempts towards colonization. The charter of Charles I. to the adventurers associated for planting the province of Massachusetts Bay, was perfectly similar to those granted by his father to the two Virginian companies and to the council of Plymouth. The new adventurers were incorporated as a body politic, and their right to the territory, which they had purchased from the council of Plymouth, being confirmed by the king, they were empowered to dispose of the lands, and to govern the people who should settle upon them. The first governor of the company, and his assistants, were named by the crown; the right of electing their successors was vested in the members of the corporation. The executive power was committed to the governor and assistants; that of legislation to the body of proprietors, who might make statutes and orders for the good of the community, not inconsistent with the laws of England,

England, and inforce the observance of them, according to the course of other corporations within the realm. Their lands were to be held by the same liberal tenure with those granted to the Virginian company. They obtained the same temporary exemption from internal taxes, and from duties on goods exported or imported; and notwithstanding their migration to America, they and their descendants were declared to be entitled to all the rights of natural-born subjects.\*

The manifest object of this charter was to confer on the adventurers who undertook to people the territory on Massachusetts Bay, all the corporate rights possessed by the council of Plymouth, from which they had purchased it, and to form them into a public body, resembling other great trading companies, which the spirit of monarchy had at that time multiplied in the kingdom. The king seems not to have foreseen, or to have suspected, the secret intentions of those who projected the measure; for so far was he from alluring emigrants, by any hopes of indulgence with respect to their religious scruples, or from promising any relaxation from the rigour of the penal statutes against non-conformists, that he expressly provides for having the oath  
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\* Hutchinson's Collect. of Original Papers, p. 1. &c.

of supremacy administered to every person who shall pass to the colony, or inhabit there.\*

But whatever were the intentions of the king (1629) the adventurers kept their own object steadily in view. Soon after their powers to establish a colony were rendered complete by the royal charter, they fitted out five ships for New England; on board of which embarked upwards of three hundred passengers, with a view of settling there. These were mostly zealous Puritans, whose chief inducement to relinquish their native land was the hope of enjoying religious liberty, in a country far removed from the seat of government and the oppression of ecclesiastical courts. Some eminent non-conformist ministers accompanied them as their spiritual instructors. On their arrival in New England (June 29) they found the wretched remainder of a small body of

\* Hutchinson's Collect. of Original Papers, p. 18.—It is surprising, that Mr. Neal, an industrious, and generally a well-informed writer, should affirm, that "free liberty of conscience was granted by this charter to all who should settle in those parts, to worship God in their own way." Hist. of N. Engl. i. 124. This he repeats in his History of the Puritans, ii. 210; and subsequent historians have copied him implicitly. No permission of that kind, however, is contained in the charter; and such an indulgence would have been inconsistent with all the maxims of Charles and his ministers during the course of his reign. At the time when Charles issued the charter, the influence of Laud over his councils was at its height, the Puritans were prosecuted with the greatest severity, and the kingdom was ruled entirely by prerogative. This is not an æra in which one can expect to meet with concessions in favour of non-conformists from a prince of Charles's character and principles.

of emigrants, who had left England the preceding year, under the conduct of Endicott, a deep enthusiast, whom, prior to their incorporation by the royal charter, the associates had appointed deputy governor. They were settled at a place called by the Indians Naunekeag, and to which Endicott, with the fond affectation of fanatics of that age to employ the language and appellations of scripture in the affairs of common life, had given the name of Salem.

The emigrants under Endicott, and such as now joined them, coincided perfectly in religious principles. They were Puritans of the strictest form; and to men of this character the institution of a church was naturally of such interesting concern as to take place of every other object. In this first transaction, they displayed, at once, the extent of the reformation at which they aimed. Without regard to the sentiments of that monarch under the sanction of whose authority they settled in America, and from whom they derived right to act as a body politic, and in contempt of the laws of England, with which the charter required that none of their acts or ordinances should be inconsistent, they adopted in their infant church that form of policy which has since been distinguished by the name of Independent. They united together (August 6) in religious society, by a solemn covenant with God, and with  
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one another, and in strict conformity, as they imagined, to the rules of scripture. They elected a pastor, a teacher, and an elder, whom they set apart for their respective offices, by imposition of the hands of the brethren. All who were that day admitted members of the church, signified their assent to a confession of faith drawn up by their teacher, and gave an account of the foundation of their own hopes as Christians; and it was declared, that no person should hereafter be received into communion until he gave satisfaction to the church with respect to his faith and sanctity. The form of public worship which they instituted was without a liturgy, disincumbered of every superfluous ceremony, and reduced to the lowest standard of Calvinistic simplicity.\*

It was with the utmost complacence that men, passionately attached to their own notions, and who had long been restrained from avowing them, employed themselves in framing this model of a pure church. But, in the first moment that they began to taste of Christian liberty themselves, they forgot that other men had an equal title to enjoy it. Some of their number, retaining an high veneration for the ritual of the English church, were so much offended at the total abolition of it, that they

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\* Math. Magnal. p. 18. Neal's Hist. of N. Engl. i. 126. Chalmers, p. 143.



withdrew from communion with the newly-instituted church, and assembled separately for the worship of God. With an inconsistency, of which there are such flagrant instances among Christians of every denomination, that it cannot be imputed as a reproach peculiar to any sect, the very men who had themselves fled from persecution became persecutors; and had recourse, in order to enforce their own opinions, to the same unhallowed weapons, against the employment of which they had lately remonstrated with so much violence. Endicott called the two chief malcontents before him; and though they were men of note, and among the number of original patentees, he expelled them from the society, and sent them home in the ships which were returning to England.\* The colonists were now united in sentiments; but on the approach of winter, they suffered so much from diseases, which carried off almost one half of their number, that they made little progress in occupying the country.

Meanwhile the directors of the company in England exerted their utmost endeavours in order to reinforce the colony with a numerous body of new settlers; and as the intolerant spirit of Laud exacted conformity to all the injunctions of the church with greater rigour than

\* Mather, p. 19. Neal, p. 129.

than ever, the condition of such as had any scruples with respect to this, became so intolerable, that many accepted of their invitation to a secure retreat in New England. Several of these were persons of greater opulence and of better condition than any who had hitherto migrated to that country. But as they intended to employ their fortunes, as well as to hazard their persons, in establishing a permanent colony there, and foresaw many inconveniences from their subjection to laws made without their own consent, and framed by a society which must always be imperfectly acquainted with their situation, they insisted that the corporate powers of the company should be transferred from England to America, and the government of the colony be vested entirely in those who, by settling in the latter country, became members of it.\* The company had already expended considerable sums in prosecuting the design of their institution, without having received almost any return, and had no prospect of gain, or even of reimbursement, but what was too remote and uncertain to be suitable to the ideas of merchants, the most numerous class of its members. They hesitated, however, with respect to the legality of granting the demand of the intended emigrants. But such was their eagerness to be disengaged from

\* Hutchinson's Coll. of Papers, p. 25.

from an unpromising adventure, that, "by general consent, it was determined, that the charter should be transferred, and the government be settled in New England."\* To the members of the corporation who chose to remain at home was reserved a share in the trading stock and profits of the company during seven years.

In this singular transaction, to which there is nothing similar in the history of English colonization, two circumstances merit particular attention; one is the power of the company to make this transference; the other is the silent acquiescence with which the king permitted it to take place. If the validity of this determination of the company be tried by the charter which constituted it a body politic, and conveyed to it all the corporate powers with which it was invested, it is evident that it could neither exercise those powers in any mode different from what the charter prescribed, nor alienate them in such a manner, as to convert the jurisdiction of a trading corporation in England into a provincial government in America. But from the first institution of the company of Massachusetts Bay, its members seem to have been animated with a spirit of innovation in civil policy, as well as in religion; and by

\* Mather, p. 20. Hutchinson's *Hist.* p. 12. Chalmers, p. 150.

by the habit of rejecting established usages in the one, they were prepared for deviating from them in the other. They had applied for a royal charter, in order to give legal effect to their operations in England, as acts of a body politic ; but the persons whom they sent out to America, as soon as they landed there, considered themselves as individuals, united together by voluntary association, possessing the natural right of men who form a society, to adopt what mode of government, and to exact what laws they deemed most conducive to general felicity. Upon this principle of being entitled to judge and to decide for themselves, they established their church in Salem, without regard to the institutions of the church of England, of which the charter supposed them to be members, and bound of consequence to conformity with its ritual. Suitably to the same ideas, we shall observe them framing all their future plans of civil and ecclesiastical policy. The king, though abundantly vigilant in observing and checking slighter encroachments on his prerogative, was either so much occupied at that time with other cares occasioned by his fatal breach with his parliament, that he could not attend to the proceedings of the company ; or he was so much pleased with the prospect of removing a body of turbulent subjects to a distant country, where they might be useful, and could not prove dangerous, that he



he was disposed to connive at the irregularity of a measure which facilitated their departure.

Without interruption from the crown, the adventurers proceeded to carry their scheme into execution. In a general court, John Winthrop was appointed governor, and Thomas Dudley deputy-governor, and eighteen assistants were chosen; in whom, together with the body of freemen who should settle in New England (1630) were vested all the corporate rights of the company. With such zeal and activity did they prepare for emigration, that in the course of the ensuing year seventeen ships sailed for New England, and aboard of these above fifteen hundred persons, among whom were several of respectable families, and in easy circumstances. On their arrival in New England, many were so ill-satisfied with the situation of Salem, that they explored the country in quest of some better station; and settling in different places around the Bay, according to their various fancies, laid the foundations of Boston, Charlestown, Dorchester, Roxborough, and other towns, which have since become considerable in the province. In each of these a church was established on the same model with that of Salem. This, together with the care of making provision for their subsistence during winter, occupied them entirely during some months. But in the first  
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general court (October 19) their disposition to consider themselves as members of an independent society, unconfined by the regulations in their charter, began to appear. The election of the governor and deputy governor, the appointment of all other officers, and even the power of making laws, all which were granted by the charter to the freemen, were taken from them, and vested in the council of assistants. But the aristocratical spirit of this resolution did not accord with the ideas of equality prevalent among the people, who had been surprised into an approbation of it. Next year (1631) the freemen, whose numbers had been greatly augmented by the admission of new members, resumed their former rights.

But, at the same time, they ventured to deviate from the charter in a matter of greater moment, which deeply affected all the future operations of the colony, and contributed greatly to form that peculiar character by which the people of New England have been distinguished. A law was passed, declaring that none shall hereafter be admitted freemen, or be entitled to any share in the government, or be capable of being chosen magistrates, or even of serving as jurymen, but such as have been received into the church as members.\* By this

\* Hutchinson, p. 26. Chalmers, p. 153.

this resolution, every person who did not hold the favourite opinions concerning the doctrines of religion, the discipline of the church, or the rites of worship, was at once cast out of the society, and stripped of all the privileges of a citizen. An uncontrolled power of approving or rejecting the claims of those who applied for admission into communion with the church being vested in the ministers and leading men of each congregation, the most valuable of all civil rights was made to depend on their decision, with respect to qualifications purely ecclesiastical. As in examining into these, they proceeded not by any known or established rules, but exercised a discretionary judgment, the clergy rose gradually to a degree of influence and authority, from which the levelling spirit of the independent church policy was calculated to exclude them. As by their determination the political condition of every citizen was fixed, all paid court to men possessed of such an important power, by assuming those austere and sanctimonious manners which were known to be the most certain recommendation to their favour. In consequence of this ascendant, which was acquired chiefly by the wildest enthusiasts among the clergy, their notions became a standard to which all studied to conform, and the singularities characteristic of the Puritans in that age increased, of which many remarkable instances will occur in the course of our narrative,                    Though

Though a considerable number of planters was cut off by the diseases prevalent in a country so imperfectly cultivated by its original inhabitants, as to be still almost one continued forest, and several, discouraged by the hardships to which they were exposed, returned to England (1632) recruits sufficient to replace them arrived. At the same time the small-pox, a distemper fatal to the people of the New World, swept away such multitudes of the natives that some whole tribes disappeared; and Heaven, by thus evacuating a country in which the English might settle without molestation, was supposed to declare its intention that they should occupy it.

As several of the vacant Indian stations were well chosen, such was the eagerness of the English to take possession of them, that their settlements became more numerous and more widely dispersed than suited the condition of an infant colony. This led to an innovation which totally altered the nature and constitution of the government. When a general court was to be held in the year one thousand six hundred and thirty-four, the freemen, instead of attending it in person as the charter prescribed, elected representatives in their different districts, authorizing them to appear in their name, with full power to deliberate and decide concerning every point that fell under the cognizance

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nizance of the general court. Whether this measure was suggested by some designing leaders, or whether they found it prudent to soothe the people by complying with their inclination, is uncertain. The representatives were admitted; and considered themselves, in conjunction with the governor and assistants, as the supreme legislative assembly of the colony. In assertion of their own rights they enacted, that no law should be passed, no tax should be imposed, and no public officer should be appointed, but in the general assembly. The prettexts for making this new arrangement were plausible. The number of freemen was greatly increased; many resided at a distance from the places where the supreme courts were held; personal attendance became inconvenient; the form of government in their own country had rendered familiar the idea of delegating their rights, and committing the guardianship of their liberties, to representatives of their own choice, and the experience of ages had taught them that this important trust might with safety be lodged in their hands. Thus did the company of Massachusetts Bay, in less than six years from its incorporation by the king, mature and perfect a scheme which, I have already observed, some of its more artful and aspiring leaders seem to have had in view when the association for peopling New England was first formed. The colony must henceforward  
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be considered, not as a corporation whose powers were defined, and its mode of procedure regulated by its charter, but as a society, which, having acquired or assumed political liberty, had, by its own voluntary deed, adopted a constitution or government framed on the model of that in England.

But however liberal their system of civil policy might be, as their religious opinions were no longer under any restraint of authority, the spirit of fanaticism continued to spread, and became every day wilder and more extravagant. Williams, a minister of Salem, in high estimation, having conceived an antipathy to the Cross of St. George in the standard of England, declaimed against it with so much vehemence as a relic of superstition and idolatry, which ought not to be retained among a people so pure and sanctified, that Endicot, one of the members of the court of assistants, in a transport of zeal, publicly cut out the Cross from the ensign displayed before the governor's gate. This frivolous matter interested and divided the colony. Some of the militia scrupled to follow colours in which there was a Cross, lest they should do honour to an idol; others refused to serve under a mutilated banner, lest they should be suspected of having renounced their allegiance to the crown of England. After a long controversy, carried on by both parties with  
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that heat and zeal which in trivial disputes supply the want of argument, the contest was terminated by a compromise. The Cross was retained in the ensigns of forts and ships, but erased from the colours of the militia. Williams, on account of this, as well as of some other doctrines deemed unsound, was banished out of the colony.\*

The prosperous state of New England was now so highly extolled, and the simple frame of its ecclesiastic policy was so much admired by all whose affections were estranged from the church of England, that crowds of new settlers flocked thither (1635). Among these were two persons, whose names have been rendered memorable by the appearance which they afterwards made on a more conspicuous theatre; one was Hugh Peters, the enthusiastic and intriguing chaplain of Oliver Cromwell; the other Mr. Henry Vane, son of Sir Henry Vane, a privy counsellor, high in office, and of great credit with the king; a young man of a noble family, animated with such zeal for pure religion and such love of liberty as induced him to relinquish all his hopes in England, and to settle in a colony hitherto no farther advanced in improvement than barely to afford subsistence to its members, was received with

\* Neal's Hist. of N. Eng. p. 140, &c. Hutchinson, p. 37. Chalmers, p. 156.

with the fondest admiration. His mortified appearance, his demure look, and rigid manners, carried even beyond the standard of preciseness in that society which he joined, seemed to indicate a man of high spiritual attainments, while his abilities and address in business pointed him out as worthy of the highest station in the community. With universal consent, and high expectations of advantage from his administration, he was elected governor in the year (1636) subsequent to his arrival. But as the affairs of an infant colony afforded not objects adequate to the talents of Vane, his busy pragmatistical spirit occupied itself with theological subtilties and speculations unworthy of his attention. These were excited by a woman, whose reveries produced such effects, both within the colony and beyond its precincts; that, frivolous as they may now appear, they must be mentioned as an occurrence of importance in its history.

It was the custom at that time in New England, among the chief men in every congregation, to meet once a week, in order to repeat the sermons which they had heard, and to hold religious conference with respect to the doctrine contained in them. Mrs. Hutchinson, whose husband was among the most respectable members of the colony, regretting that persons of her sex were excluded from the benefit of those meetings,

meetings, assembled stately in her house a number of women, who employed themselves in pious exercises similar to those of the men. At first she satisfied herself with repeating what she could recollect of the discourses delivered by their teachers. She began afterwards to add illustrations, and at length proceeded to censure some of the clergy as unsound, and to vent opinions and fancies of her own. These were all founded on the system which is denominated Antinomian by divines, and tinged with the deepest enthusiasm. She taught, that sanctity of life is no evidence of justification, or of a state of favour with God; and that such as inculcated the necessity of manifesting the reality of our faith by obedience, preached only a covenant of works; she contended that the spirit of God dwelt personally in good men, and by inward revelations and impressions they received the fullest discoveries of the divine will. The fluency and confidence with which she delivered these notions gained her many admirers and proselytes, not only among the vulgar, but among the principal inhabitants. The whole colony was interested and agitated. Vane, whose sagacity and acuteness seemed to forsake him whenever they were turned towards religion, espoused and defended her wildest tenets. Many conferences were held (1637) days of fasting and humiliation were appointed; a general synod was called,

called, and, after dissensions so violent as threatened the dissolution of the colony, Mrs. Hutchinson's opinions were condemned as erroneous, and she herself banished. Several of her disciples withdrew from the province of their own accord. Vane quitted America in disgust, unlamented even by those who had lately admired him; some of whom regarded him now as a mere visionary, and others as one of those dark turbulent spirits doomed to embroil every society into which they enter.\*

However much these theological contests might disquiet the colony of Massachusetts Bay, they contributed to the more speedy population of America. When Williams was banished from Salem in the year one thousand six hundred and thirty-four, such was the attachment of his hearers to a pastor whose piety they revered, that a good number of them voluntarily accompanied him in his exile. They directed their march towards the south; and having purchased from the natives a considerable tract of land, to which Williams gave the name of Providence, they settled there. They were joined soon after by some of those to whom the proceedings against Mrs. Hutchinson gave disgust; and by a transaction with the Indians they obtained a right to a fertile island

\* Mather, book vii. c. 3. Hutchinson, p. 53. 74. Neal, p. 1. 44. 165, &c. Chalmers, p. 163.



island in Naraganset Bay, which acquired the name of Rhode Island. Williams remained among them upwards of forty years, respected as the father and the guide of the colony which he had planted. His spirit differed from that of the Puritans in Massachusetts; it was mild and tolerating; and having ventured himself to reject established opinions, he endeavoured to secure the same liberty to other men, by maintaining, that the exercise of private judgment was a natural and sacred right; that the civil magistrate has no compulsive jurisdiction in the concerns of religion; that the punishment of any person on account of his opinions, was an encroachment on conscience, and an act of persecution.\* These humane principles he instilled into his followers; and all who felt or dreaded oppression in other settlements, resorted to a community in which universal toleration was known to be a fundamental maxim. In the plantations of Providence and Rhode Island, political union was established by voluntary association, and the equality of condition among the members, as well as their religious opinions; their form of government was purely democratical, the supreme power being lodged in the freemen personally assembled. In this state they remained until they were incorporated by charter.†

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\* Neal's Hist. of N. Eng. p. 141.

† Hutchinson, p. 38. Neal ii. 142. Dougl. Sum. ii. p. 76, &c. Chalmers, ch. ii.



To similar causes the colony of Connecticut is indebted for its origin. The rivalry between Mr. Cotton and Mr. Hooker, two favourite ministers in the settlement of Massachusetts Bay, disposed the latter, who was least successful in this contest for fame and power, to wish for some settlement at a distance from a competitor by whom his reputation was eclipsed. A good number of those who had imbibed Mrs. Hutchinson's notions, and were offended at such as combated them, offered to accompany him. Having employed proper persons to explore the country, they pitched upon the west side of the great river Connecticut as the most inviting station; and in the year one thousand six hundred and thirty-six, about an hundred persons, with their wives and families, after a fatiguing march of many days through woods and swamps, arrived there, and laid the foundation of the towns of Hartford, Springfield, and Weatherfield. This settlement was attended with peculiar irregularities. Part of the district now occupied lay beyond the limits of the territory granted to the colony of Massachusetts Bay, and yet the emigrants took a commission from the governor and court of assistants, empowering them to exercise jurisdiction in that country. The Dutch from Manhados or New York, having discovered the river Connecticut, and established some trading houses

upon it, had acquired all the right that prior possession confers. Lord Say and Sele, and Lord Brooke, the heads of two illustrious families, were so much alarmed at the arbitrary measures of Charles I. both in his civil and ecclesiastical administration, that they took a resolution, not unbecoming young men of noble birth and liberal sentiments, of retiring to the New World, in order to enjoy such a form of religion as they approved of, and those liberties which they deemed essential to the well-being of society. They, too, fixed on the banks of the Connecticut as their place of settlement, and had taken possession, by building a fort at the mouth of the river, which, from their united names, was called Say Brook. The emigrants from Massachusetts, without regarding either the defects in their own right or the pretensions of other claimants, kept possession, and proceeded with vigour to clear and cultivate the country. By degrees they got rid of every competitor. The Dutch, recently settled in America, and too feeble to engage in a war, peaceably withdrew from Connecticut. Lord Say and Sele, and Lord Brook, made over to the colony whatever title they might have to any lands in that region. Society was established by a voluntary compact of the freemen; and though they soon disclaimed all dependance on the colony of Massachusetts Bay, they retained

retained such veneration for its legislative wisdom, as to adopt a form of government nearly resembling its institutions, with respect both to civil and ecclesiastical policy. At a subsequent period, the colony of Connecticut was likewise incorporated by royal charter.\*

The history of the first attempts to people the provinces of New Hampshire and Maine, which form the fourth and most extensive division in New England, is obscure and perplexed, by the interfering claims of various proprietors. The company of Plymouth had inconsiderately parcelled out the northern part of the territory contained in its grant among different persons: Of these only Sir Ferdinando Gorges and Captain Mason seem to have had any serious intention to occupy the lands allotted to them. Their efforts to accomplish this were meritorious and persevering, but unsuccessful. The expence of settling colonies in an uncultivated country must necessarily be great and immediate; the prospect of a return is often uncertain and always remote. The funds of two private adventurers were not adequate to such an undertaking. Nor did the planters whom they sent out possess that principle of enthusiasm, which animated their neighbours of Massachusetts with vigour, to struggle

\* Hutchinson, p. 44, &c. Neal, i. 147. Douglas, ii. 158, &c. Chalmers' Annals, ch. 12.

struggle through all the hardships and dangers to which society, in its infancy, is exposed in a savage land. Gorges and Mason, it is probable, must have abandoned their design, if, from the same motives that settlements had been made in Rhode Island and Connecticut, colonists had not unexpectedly migrated into New Hampshire and Main. Mr. Wheelright, a minister of some note, nearly related to Mrs. Hutchinson, and one of her most fervent admirers and partisans, had, on this account, been banished from the province of Massachusetts Bay.\* In quest of a new station, he took a course opposite to the other exiles; and advancing towards the north, founded the town of Exeter, on a small river flowing into Piscataqua Bay. His followers, few in number, but firmly united, were of such rigid principles, that even the churches of Massachusetts did not appear to them sufficiently pure. From time to time they received some recruits, whom love of novelty, or dissatisfaction with the ecclesiastical institutions of the other colonies, prompted to join them. Their plantations were widely dispersed, but the country was thinly peopled, and its political state extremely unsettled. The colony of Massachusetts Bay claimed jurisdiction over them, as occupying lands situated

\* Hutchinson, p. 70.



ated within the limits of their grant. Gorges and Mason asserted the rights conveyed to them as proprietors by their charter. In several districts, the planters, without regarding the pretensions of either party, governed themselves by maxims and laws copied from those of their brethren in the adjacent colonies.\* The first reduction of the political constitution in the provinces of New Hampshire and Main into a regular and permanent form, was subsequent to the revolution.

By extending their settlements, the English became exposed to new danger. The tribes of Indians around Massachusetts Bay were feeble and unwarlike; yet from regard to justice, as well as motives of prudence, the first colonists were studious to obtain the consent of the natives before they ventured to occupy any of their lands; and though in such transactions the consideration given was often very inadequate to the value of the territory acquired, it was sufficient to satisfy the demands of the proprietors. The English took quiet possession of the lands thus conveyed to them, and no open hostility broke out between them and the ancient possessors. But the colonies of Providence and Connecticut soon found that they were surrounded by more powerful and martial

\* Hutchinson, p. 103, &c. 176, Douglas's Sum, ii. 22, &c. Chalmers' Annals, ch. 17.



tial nations. Among these the most considerable were the Naragansets and Pequods; the former seated on the Bay which bears their name, and the latter occupying the territory which stretches from the river Pequod along the banks of the Connecticut. The Pequods were a formidable people, who could bring into the field a thousand warriors, not inferior in courage to any in the New World. They foresaw, not only that the extermination of the Indian race must be the consequence of permitting the English to spread over the continent of America, but that if measures were not speedily concerted to prevent it, the calamity would be unavoidable. With this view they applied to the Narragansets, requesting them to forget ancient animosities for a moment, and to co-operate with them in expelling a common enemy who threatened both with destruction. They represented that, when those strangers first landed, the object of their visit was not suspected, and no proper precautions were taken to check their progress; that now, by sending out colonies in one year towards three different quarters, their intentions were manifest, and the people of America must abandon their native seats to make way for unjust intruders.

But the Naragansets and Pequods, like most of the contiguous tribes in America, were  
rivals,

rivals, and there subsisted between them an hereditary and implacable enmity. Revenge is the darling passion of savages; in order to secure the indulgence of which there is no present advantage that they will not sacrifice, and no future consequence which they do not totally disregard. The Naragansets, instead of closing with the prudent proposal of their neighbours, discovered their hostile intentions to the governor of Massachusetts Bay; and, eager to lay hold on such a favourable opportunity of wreaking their vengeance on their ancient foes, entered into an alliance with the English against them. The Pequods, more exasperated than discouraged by the imprudence and treachery of their countrymen, took the field, and carried on the war in the usual mode of Americans. They surprised stragglers, and scalped them; they plundered and burnt remote settlements; they attacked Fort Say Brook without success, though garrisoned only by twenty men; and when the English began to act offensively, they retired to fastnesses which they deemed inaccessible. The different colonies had agreed to unite against the common enemy, each furnishing a quota of men in proportion to its numbers. The troops of Connecticut which lay most exposed to danger were soon assembled. The march of those from Massachusetts, which formed the most considerable body, was retarded by the  
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most singular cause that ever influenced the operations of a military force. When they were mustered previous to their departure, it was found that some of the officers, as well as of the private foldiers, were still under a covenant of works; and that the blessing of God could not be implored or expected to crown the arms of such unhallowed men with success. The alarm was general, and many arrangements necessary in order to cast out the unclean, and to render this little band sufficiently pure to fight the battles of a people who entertained high ideas of their own sanctity.\*

Meanwhile the Connecticut troops, reinforced by a small detachment from Say Brook, found it necessary to advance towards the enemy. They were posted on a rising ground, in the middle of a swamp towards the head of the river Mistick, which they had surrounded with palisadoes, the best defence that their slender skill in the art of fortification had discovered. Though they knew that the English were in motion, yet, with the usual improvidence and security of savages, they took no measures either to observe their progress, or to guard against being surprised themselves. The enemy (May 20) unperceived, reached the palisadoes, and if a dog had not given the  
alarm

\* Neal, i. 168.

alarm by barking, the Indians must have been massacred without resistance. In a moment; however they started to arms, and raising the war-cry, prepared to repel the assailants. But at that early period of their intercourse with the Europeans; the Americans were little acquainted with the use of gunpowder; and dreaded its effects extremely. While some of the English galled them with an incessant fire through the intervals between the palisadoes, others forced their way by the entries into the fort; filled only with branches of trees; and setting fire to the huts which were covered with reeds, the confusion and terror quickly became general. Many of the women and children perished in the flames; and the warriors, in endeavouring to escape, were either slain by the English, or falling into the hands of their Indian allies, who surrounded the fort at a distance, were reserved for a more cruel fate. After the junction of the troops from Massachusetts, the English resolved to pursue their victory; and hunting the Indians from one place of retreat to another, some subsequent encounters were hardly less fatal to them than the action on the Mistick. In less than three months the tribe of Pequods was extirpated: A few miserable fugitives who took refuge among the neighbouring Indians, being incorporated by them, lost their name as a distinct people. In this first essay of their arms,

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the colonists of New England seem to have been conducted by skilful and enterprising officers, and displayed both courage and perseverance as soldiers. But they stained their laurels by the use which they made of victory. Instead of treating the Pequods as an independent people, who made a gallant effort to defend the property, the rights, and the freedom of their nation, they retaliated upon them all the barbarities of American war. Some they massacred in cold blood, others they gave up to be tortured by their Indian allies, a considerable number they sold as slaves in Bermudas, the rest were reduced to servitude among themselves.\*

But reprehensible as this conduct of the English must be deemed, their vigorous efforts in this decisive campaign filled all the surrounding tribes of Indians with such an high opinion of their valour, as secured a long tranquillity to all their settlements. At the same time the violence of administration in England continued to increase their population and strength, by forcing many respectable subjects to tear themselves from all the tender connections that bind men to their native country, and to fly for refuge to a region of the New World.

\* Hutchinson, p. 58, 76, &c. Mather. Magnalia, b. vii. ch. 6. Hubbard's State of N. Eng. p. 5. 116, &c.



World, which hitherto presented to them nothing that could allure them thither but exemption from oppression. The number of those emigrants drew the attention of government, and appeared so formidable, that a proclamation was issued, prohibiting masters of ships from carrying passengers to New England without special permission. On many occasions this injunction was eluded or disregarded. Fatally for the king, it operated with full effect in one instance. Sir Arthur Haslerig, John Hampden, Oliver Cromwell, and some other persons whose principles and views coincided with theirs, impatient to enjoy those civil and religious liberties which they struggled in vain to obtain in Great Britain, hired some ships to carry them and their attendants to New England. By order of council, an embargo was laid on these when on the point of sailing; and Charles, far from suspecting that the future revolutions in his kingdoms were to be excited and directed by persons in such an humble sphere of life, forcibly detained the men destined to overturn his throne, and to terminate his days by a violent death.\*

But in spite of all the efforts of government to check this spirit of migration, the measures of the king and his ministers were considered by

\* Mather, *Magnalia*, b. i. ch. 5. p. 23. Neal's *Hist. of N. Eng.* i. 151. Chalmers' *Annals*, i. 155, 160, &c.







